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ESSAYS

IN

HISTORY AND ART

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BY

R. H. PATTERSON

AUTHOR OF THE

"NEW REVOLUTION; OR, THE NAPOLEONIC POLICY IN EUROPE"

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PREFACE

In offering these Essays to the public, I have removed from them any passages and allusions that were of an ephemeral *nature;* and also, when I had written several articles on different parts of the same subject, I have recast and fused them into one. In this way three separate articles have been recast and conjoined in the essay on the "National Life of China;" two, in "Our Indian Empire;" and two, in "India: its Castes and Creeds." I have also recast the middle portion of the essay on "Real and Ideal Beauty," incorporating passages from minor papers on the same subject; and have inserted two woodcuts, illustrating the principle of harmonic proportion as exemplified in the peerless edifice of the Parthenon of Athens.

Since the essay on "Our Indian Empire" was printed off, the Governor-General has issued an edict conceding

the long-withheld right of purchasing land in India on fee-simple, and also of redeeming the land-tax,—the urgent expediency of which measures is advocated in the essay, and the importance of which will be seen from the exposition there given of the peculiar modes of land-tenure which have existed in India from immemorial time.

R. H. P.

DECEMBER 26, 1861.

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ERRATUM.

On page 201, sixth line from *top*, *for* "*irrigation*, but for vegetation," *read* "vegetation, but for irrigation."

ESSAYS

IN

HISTORY AND ART

COLOUR IN NATURE AND ART

NATURE is no mere utilitarian. The so-called utility which regards only the lower half of human nature—which cares for bodily wants and pecuniary profits, but which ignores the higher emotions from the regulated play of whose fountains proceeds all that is worthy of the name of Joy—finds nothing in the economy of nature to support its materialistic exclusiveness. If the Utilitarians had had the making of our world, they would doubtless have made it very fertile and free of weeds, and Quaker-like have dressed it in shapes and hues savouring strongly of the sombre and the useful;—but alas for the beautiful! That cream of life and bloom of nature, what is it to them? Working unseen upon the spirit, and only revealing itself by the lighting of the eye and the beaming of the countenance,—exciting an emotion which, though brilliant and elevating and full of the divine, seems to *produce* nothing, and rather to lessen men's devotion to materialistic pursuits,—Utilitarians ignore it, and in the world of their own devising, would have flung aside flowers as cumberers of the ground, and looked upon roses as but painted weeds. They

"Could strip, for aught the prospect yields
To them, their verdure from the fields,
And take the radiance from the clouds
With which the sun his setting shrouds."

Not so, however, has acted the Divine Maker. All that is useful is indeed around us, but how much more is there beside? We stroll out of a morning, and lo! birds are singing, and waters murmuring, and the sun is rising with a cool brightness that makes everything look young,—dancing like dazzling silver on the wavelets of the brook, and filling the skies with a joyous splendour, and the heart with an ethereal merriment. Who has not felt, in the bright hours of all seasons, but especially in the radiant days of summer, what the poet has well called

"The strange superfluous glory of the air!"

as if, beside all the combined gases needful for our respiration, there were present some ethereal nectarine element, baffling the analysis of the chemist, yet revealing its power in the thrill of exuberant life which it excites in the human frame,—a true *elixir vitæ*, a "superfluous glory" added for the sole purpose of producing joy. Enter the garden, and forthwith the eye is charmed with the sight of flowers,—the nostrils thrill with the scents floating on the morning air,—and peaches and all manner of fruit are there, pleasing both eye and palate far more than mere utility demands. The very hedgerows, and woody dells of nature's own planting, are full of beauty,—bright and sweet with the hawthorn, the sweetbriar, and the honeysuckle. Hill and valley meet each other by picturesque gradation; brooks and rivers leap and run in courses which please all the more because dissimilar from the rectilinearism of utility. All things proclaim that the Divine Architect, while amply providing for the wants, has not forgotten the enjoyment, of his creatures; and having implanted in the human soul a yearning after the beautiful, has surrounded us with a thousand objects by whose presence that yearning may be gratified.

Perhaps the most striking example of this Divine care for human enjoyment is to be seen in the lovely mantle of Colour in which the earth is robed. Like all things very common, we do not sufficiently prize this robe of beauty which Nature puts on for our gratification. It is in such complete harmony with our visual sense, that—like musical harmony also, when long continued—its sweetness fails to impress us if not broken at times by a discord. But suppose the case of a man born blind, and to whom the aspect of the outer world—nay, the very meaning of the word "colour"—has remained a mystery until he has reached the years of reflection. Fancy such a man's eye at length released from darkness, and endeavour to imagine his impressions. A thrill passes through him as the coloured beams first rush in, and awaken the emotions of a new sense. All around, he beholds a tinted mass; earth and sky, land and water, are seen by him only as expanses of varied colour. Everything is coloured,—and the forms of nature are to him but tinted surfaces, whose outline consists of the bordering of one colour upon another. Below and around him is a far-reaching expanse of green,—above him, a mighty canopy of blue; and he feels that nothing could suit so well, for wide and permanent beholding, as this lively green of the earth, and the cool calm azure of the skies. But variegating those vast surfaces of blue and green, he sees spots and shadings of all diverse hues: the purple of the heath-clad mountains, the golden bloom of the furze upon their lower slopes, the rich mosaic of the autumnal woods, the grey of rocks and ruins, or the yellow of the waving corn-fields. Above, by night, he sees the dark-blue expanse sparkling all over with the light of stars, or decked with a silvery veil by the radiance of the moon;—by day, he sees it checkered and sailed over by clouds, ever-changing in aspect, and at length bursting into the gorgeous magnificence of sunset, when clouds and sky are alike filled with richest colouring, with brilliant ever-shifting hues which at once dazzle and mock the gaze. All this is new to him.

He has walked the earth for years, tasted its fruits, felt and understood many of its forms,—he has known how useful it is, but not till now does he comprehend its beauty. He stands amazed at the spectacle which his new-born vision reveals to him : the sights are all strange,—but not so the emotion which they produce in him. The same nameless pleasure, the same indescribable sensation of enjoyment, which now swells and thrills within him, he has felt before, when listening to the strains of music, or when some love-born joy has set the chords of his heart a-vibrating. It is a joyous excitement,—he nor any man can tell you no more; but he knows from previous experience that it is a sign of the soul having found something in rare harmony with itself.

A garden—or those graceful crystal pavilions which are now devoted to the culture and display of fine exotic plants and flowers—is the place where beauty of colour may be seen in its greatest variety and perfection. There colour is seen in peculiar gorgeousness, and combined with so much else that is attractive, as to constitute Flowers but another name for the beautiful. The most popular of Transatlantic novelists, in a burst of enthusiasm, styles them "Earth's raptures and aspirations—her better moments—her lucid intervals." Certainly they are the lovely offspring of earth's brightest hours; and so ravishing are they, from the blended charms of brilliant colour, graceful form, and exquisite odour, that no one need wonder that they should be chosen for so many sweet purposes of life, or to symbolise in the poetic regions of the South the language and emotions of mankind. "The greatest men," says Mrs H. B. Stowe, "have always thought much of flowers. Luther always kept a flower in a glass, on his writing-table; and when he was waging his great public controversy with Eckius, he kept a flower in his hand. Lord Bacon has a beautiful passage about flowers. As to Shakespeare, he is a perfect Alpine valley,—he is full of flowers; they spring, and blossom, and wave in every cleft of his mind. Witness the *Midsummer*

Night's Dream. Even Milton, cold, serene, and stately as he is, breaks forth into exquisite gushes of tenderness and fancy when he marshals the flowers, as in *Lycidas* and *Comus.*"

Whatever be the subsidiary sources of attraction in flowers, Colour unquestionably is the supreme one. Men often talk disparagingly of this kind of beauty, as if it were something far lower in its nature than the beauty of Form and Sound, and indeed hardly worthy of our regard at all. This is a great mistake, and is owing to the circumstance either that the majority of mankind are not very sensitive to any kind of beauty, or because a certain fashion of speaking has led them insensibly to disregard this particular manifestation of it. "Such expressions," says Mr Ruskin, "are used for the most part in thoughtlessness; and if such disparagers of colour would only take the pains to imagine what the world and their own existence would become if the blue were taken from the sky, and the gold from the sunshine, and the verdure from the leaves, and the crimson from the blood which is the life of man, the flush from the cheek, the darkness from the eye, the radiance from the hair,—if they could but see for an instant white human creatures living in a white world, they would soon feel what they owe to colour. The fact is, that, of all God's gifts to the sight of man, colour is the holiest, the most divine, the most solemn. We speak rashly of gay colour and sad colour, for colour cannot at once be good and gay. All good colour is in some degree pensive, the loveliest is melancholy; and the purest and most thoughtful minds are those which love colour the most."

Mr Ruskin is not a correct thinker. Eminently sensitive to the impressions of external nature and art, he is destitute of the analytic power to ascertain the real character of those impressions. He lacks the turn of mind by which a man is enabled to "know himself;" and hence, when he comes to expound his views, founded upon those impressions, he not seldom arrives at most absurd conclusions. Right as to his

feelings, he is far wrong as to the inferences he draws from them. Thus, instead of understanding the feeling of repose which symmetry tends to produce in the beholder, he roundly charges Greek architecture, which is of all others most symmetrical, with being "dead" and "atheistic" in its spirit; while Gothic architecture, which is eminently irregular and expressive in its style, he quite as absurdly discovers to be symbolic of all the Christian graces. In the sentences upon Colour here quoted, he falls into a similar error. In speaking of the "sacredness" and "holiness" of colour, and in expressing his conviction that all artists who were fine colourists (*i. e.*, dealing in pure and bright colours) were good religious men, he falls into another of his fantastic mistakes, although in this case his misinterpretation of his feelings does not lead him very wide of the mark. Gifted with a fine sensibility, he feels, when pure bright colours are harmoniously presented to his eye, a thrill of elevated pleasure,—calm and pure, because free from all tincture of passion, and felt all the more divine because nameless, indefinite, and mysterious,—because baffling language to describe, or the mind to analyse it. But this sensation is not occasioned by the "holiness" of colour,—it is produced by its *beauty*. True, the emotion of the beautiful is in one sense sacred and holy; because it arises from our being brought face to face with perfection,—with objects which bear most deeply impressed upon them the signet-mark of their Maker, and which the soul of man yearns towards and welcomes with delight. It is a noble and divine feeling, but not the one for which Ruskin here mistakes it. It is physical beauty, not the "beauty of holiness," which charms us in Colour,—just as it does in music or the chefs-d'œuvres of Form. And when Ruskin goes on to say, that colour "cannot be at once good and gay," that "all good colour is pensive, and the loveliest melancholy," he enunciates only a half-truth. In so far as his remark is true, it refers not to colour only, but to every other embodiment of the beautiful. For I have ever

felt myself — and believe that the feeling is common to all persons of ordinary sensibility—that the beholding of high beauty, whether in nature or art, excites a sentiment of joy which is ever mingled with pensiveness, if not with melancholy. It is not a depression—on the contrary, it is an elation of spirits. It is not painful, but pleasing. The heart clings to it, and feels as if elevated and purified by its presence. It is a divine sadness, — occasioned by the presence of some object so beautiful, so divinely perfect, so native in character to the soul, yet so rarely met with, that the spirit yearns towards it as to a visitor from a higher sphere from which we are exiles,—and for which, in such moments, our heart is pining, it may be unconsciously, as does the wandered mountaineer for his native hills. It is this perfect harmony between beautiful objects and the soul,—it is this strange tender delight at the presence of anything supremely lovely, that led Plato to account for earthly love by the romantic theory of Reminiscence,—by the supposition that lovers, and especially lovers at first sight, are attracted to each other not, as is really the case, by a congeniality of nature, on the world-wide principle of "like draws to like," but because their souls existed together as twins in a prior and higher state of existence, and long to reunite and blend themselves together again when they happen to meet on earth. A fancy so beautiful that one might say with Cicero, "*Malim cum Platone errare quam desipere aliis!*"

In point of richness and gorgeousness of colour, flowers are unrivalled. If we may be allowed the simile, the ethereal phenomenon of colour in them gains as much by a union with earthly substance, as the spiritual nature of man is rendered more rich and beautiful by the action of the sensuous emotions. But if we would see colour in its native purity and brilliance, even Flowers must be put aside as too gross and earthy in their structure. We must turn to gems, and fire, and light itself. Throw a few grains of chemical stuff into a bright-burning fire,

and see how the flame shoots aloft in a wavy pyramid of purest emerald,—or change the substance, and lo! undulating spires of loveliest ruby or amethyst,—burning with so celestial a brilliance and transparency as if freed from every tinge of earthy matter, and re-shining with the splendour of its native skies. Or take the living light itself, and refract it through prisms of crystal, and see how the dissevered tremors of the ray reappear on the screen in a band of many-hued light,—red, blue, orange, green, yellow, and violet, blending into each other by most delicate gradations, and all glowing with a richness which no mortal pencil can copy. Substitute for this crystal prism, one of diamond,—suppose the Koh-i-noor, that "mountain of light," used as a refractor of the sunbeams—as a breaker-up of the symmetry of the solar ray,—and then imagine how brilliant would be the spectral colours thus produced. The lustre of the diamond, the topaz, the ruby, the emerald, the amethyst, is well known,—but how comes that lustre which so distinguishes them from other substances? It is because they, of all earthly substances, are the most ethereal in their structure, and hence vibrate and sparkle most readily in unison with the solar rays. Take a large diamond out of the sunlight into a dark room, and you may see it still lustrous for a few moments, because its particles are still vibrating. All substances—air, water, wood, and rock—consist of identically the same atoms, only variously arranged; each possessing different qualities according to the closeness and form in which the particles of their molecules arrange themselves. Thus carbon, when in its amorphous state, is charcoal; when crystallised in prisms, it becomes black and opaque graphite; and when crystallised in octohedrons, it is etherealised into the limpid and transparent diamond. Gems, in truth, are of all earthy substances the most similar in atomic structure to the ether,—to that pure and subtle fluid pervading all space, which gives birth to the lightning, and whose vibrations are Heat and Light. They are formed in the veins of the rock by the slow

and continuous action of electric currents, which, in the lapse of ages, gradually alter the arrangement of the ultimate atoms of the rock, crystallising them in forms congenial to their own ethereal structure.

Science can imitate in some degree this rarest and most beautiful of nature's processes. "There is strong presumptive evidence," says Mrs Somerville, "of the influence of the electric and magnetic currents on the formation and direction of the mountain-masses and mineral veins; but their slow persevering action on the ultimate atoms of matter has been placed beyond a doubt by the formation of rubies and other gems, as well as other mineral substances, by voltaic electricity." What flowers are to the vegetable world, gems are to the mineral. Both of them are embodiments of the beautiful,—but the latter are of a purer substance, and, if slower of growth, only the more imperishable.

A science of Colour must be based upon a correct theory of Light. We believe the foundations of such a theory already exist. The carefully-conducted though much-contested experiments of Von Reichenbach tend to show that all polarised bodies —such as magnets, crystals, and the like—give off a subtle light of their own, which becomes visible in a dark room to persons of a sensitive nervous organisation. We certainly know that the Earth radiates a light of its own, as exhibited in the beautiful corruscations of the aurora-borealis and the zodiacal light;—the explanation of this phenomenon being, that our planet is a large magnet, through which, as in all polarised bodies, there is a constant passage to and fro of electrical currents, which ray off in light from the poles. I make bold to say that it will ere long be discovered that every planet is luminous, although its light may be overpowered by that of some larger orb,—even as a taper's light is unnoticed in the full blaze of the sunlight; and one of the most fundamental canons in optics will be, that every body radiates more or less of light when its particles are in a state of electrical vibration. The sun and its planets being

in opposite states of polarity, a constant magnetic efflux is flowing from each to the other. This efflux occasions a thrill, or vibratory motion, in the ether which fills the interstellar spaces, and the result of this vibratory motion on the eye is Light; just as a spark, or continuous stream of light, is the concomitant of a similar flux from an electric-machine.

Under the full blaze of the sunlight, the Earth throbs as with a million pulses. Those substances which are most ethereal in their atomatic structure, such as glass and crystals, vibrate most readily and most powerfully; but all things, even the most amorphous in structure, join more or less in the electrical pulsation,—transmitting, reflecting, and modifying into colours, the limpid light which streams from the sunny skies. When the sun sets, this vibratory motion of the earth's surface to a great degree ceases, is feebly kept up by the cold radiance of the moon, or fades almost into quiescence beneath the tremulous light of the stars. Put out the stars, and all seems absolute darkness. But is it so? I trow not. Draw the thickest curtain of cloud over the sky—let neither moon nor star, nor feeblest glimmer of the violet-coloured skies of night, break the darkness; and yet, while men grope and stumble, and call to their aid the appliances of luciferous art, myriads of the lower creation—birds of the air, fish of the sea, and prowling and creeping things without number—ply their life as easily as if with them it were not night but day. What does this show, but that Light and Darkness are but relative terms—that what is Night for man is Day for some other creatures—and that even in the night-time the surface of the earth is vibrating, far too feebly indeed to excite vision in man, but sufficient for a vastly wide range of animal life, to whom eyes have been given extremely susceptible to the ethereal vibrations? The great Creator has furnished each class of his creatures with visual organs fitted for their peculiar sphere of action; and man, made for the day and the sunshine, has eyes whose range of discernment is limited to the diurnal phenomena. His organ of sight is adapted for a

certain degree of light, more or less than which tends equally to blindness. He is not more baffled by the shadows of night than by a superabundance of the illuminating rays. Light itself may become darkness. The eagle gazes undazzled on the orb of day; but to us, the sun in its noontide splendour is an invisible spot in the sky; and "dark from excessive bright," is a phrase not more poetic than true. Since, then, our range of vision is thus limited, let us beware of dogmatising as if light were a word of absolute instead of relative significance;—and although we may not be able to see what Reichenbach's sensitives saw, still less to walk by the feeble rays which suffice for the lower creation, let us confess that the auroral and zodiacal lights, as well as all sound reasoning, show that Earth has a light of her own, by which it is as seemly that some orders of creatures should walk, as we, children of light and of the day, by the nobler radiance of the sun.

It is known to men of science that every part of nature, even the hardest and most solid, is in a state of molecular motion,—so subtle, as in most cases to defy ocular scrutiny, yet indubitably revealing itself in its effects.* It is only when those vibrations grow strong and frequent that they become perceptible to our senses; and then they do so in the form of those ether-born twins, Heat and Light. Let us examine the spectrum, and see how this vibratory motion exhibits itself in the production of Colour. To the ordinary eye, the spectrum, produced by refract-

* "Nothing can be more certain," says Mrs Somerville, "than that the minute particles of matter are constantly in motion, from the action of heat, mutual attraction, and electricity. Prismatic crystals of salts of zinc are changed in a few seconds into crystals of a totally different form by the heat of the sun;—casts of shells are found in rocks, from which the animal matter has been removed, and its place supplied by mineral;—and the excavations made in rocks diminish sensibly in size, in a short time, if the rock be soft, and in a longer time when it is hard: circumstances which show an intestine motion of the particles, not only in their relative positions, but in space, which there is every reason to believe is owing to electricity,—a power, which, if not the sole agent, must at least have co-operated essentially in the formation and filling of mineral veins."—*Physical Geography*, I. chap. xv. p. 288-9.

ing or breaking up the symmetry of the solar beam, is merely a series of hues, beginning with red, brightening into yellow, and then fading away through violet into darkness. But if you examine it scientifically, you will find that those bright hues are produced by a series of tremors or vibrations of the broken ethereal ray,—the strongest and therefore slowest of which vibratory rays are least refracted, and form the red, and the feeblest and most rapid are most refracted and form the violet. But the whole of the broken rays are not represented by the colours which meet the eye in the spectrum; for at either extremity, where the red and violet fade out of sight, a succession of rays spread out, invisible to our eyes, but which might be to some extent discernible had we the night-eyes of some of the lower animals. The invisible rays at the red end are the strongest and rarest in the spectrum,—only showing themselves by giving out heat, and an electricity which is positive; those at the violet end are the feeblest and densest,—only showing themselves by their chemical or actinic properties, and by an electricity which is negative. Thus the spectrum exhibits a complex phenomenon. Firstly, we have a series of rays steadily increasing in rapidity and weakening in force of vibration, from one end to the other: (similar in this respect to the atmospheric vibrations which produce Sound, which, emerging from silence as the spectral colours emerge from darkness, run through the scale of the musician, getting quicker and feebler in their vibrations, until they again become inaudible—the ear hearing sounds, as the eye sees colours, only so long as the vibrations continue within a certain range of velocity and force, which varies somewhat in different individuals and animals,—the savage Indian, for instance, hearing sounds and seeing objects where we can see or hear nothing; and dogs and the lower creation exhibiting the same powers to a still greater extent.) But superimposed upon this steadily ascending gamut of vibrations, we have another phenomenon—namely, that one-half of the rays of the spectrum are electrically positive and give out heat, and that the other

half are negative and produce chemical action; and that in the centre those opposite influences neutralise each other. The varying phenomena of Colour, then, are not owing to a mere difference in the vibratory speed of the rays of the spectrum, but also to the electric difference of these rays, which, positive at the red end, and negative at the blue, flash up into yellow or white light in the centre where they meet.

In considering, then, the impression made on our eye by the colours of the spectrum, there are two points to be considered. In regard to illuminating power, the strongest point of the spectrum is the yellow,—in point of vibratory power, it is the red; and the colour which makes the strongest impression on our visual sense is the red-orange or scarlet, which, lying between the red and yellow, combines in fullest force the illuminating and vibratory powers. Hence it would appear that Colour is a vibratory phenomenon of the ethereal rays,—intermediate between Heat on the one hand and Actinism on the other, and attended by an overlapping of the electro-positive and electro-negative rays, of which Heat and Actinism are the representatives. But whether heat and actinism are not themselves the necessary products of a certain rate of vibration in the ether, and so the whole phenomenon of Colour be practically reducible to one of ratio of vibration, I do not profess to say. Men will get at the root of all those things by-and-by. Meanwhile, it is instructive to observe, from a paper upon Radiant Heat read before the British Association by Professor Powell, that heat-rays, or rays emanating from a hot body, when refracted, present identically the same phenomenon as those of light:—namely, that the rays of the heat-spectrum which vibrate most slowly have a heating but not an illuminating power; those of greater velocity, a luminiferous property also; and those of the greatest velocity, little heating or luminiferous, but higher chemical power.

There are some very curious phenomena connected with Colour, which invite attention from their interesting character,

and challenge inquiry from their importance. The primary colours of the spectrum, like the notes of the fundamental chord in music, blend beautifully, and are pleasing alike when seen mixed, side by side, or in succession. But when we come to mixtures of the secondary and tertiary colours, it cannot fail to be perceived that brilliance of hue is vanishing more and more; and there are some colours whose union produces nothing but a muddiness. This is the result of discord, which tends to extinguish light and colours, as it tends to destroy sounds, and ever produces a disagreeable effect upon the senses. A coloured grey or dull dingy brown is the most general result of the mixture of discordant colours; and this is precisely the colour of *mud*—which by universal consent is pronounced disagreeable, although, according to Lord Jeffrey's theory, people should like that colour as much as any other. Human nature, however, prefers the pure bright colours of the spectrum; and artists should remember—in these days of loaded palettes and infinitesimal tints—that brilliant and beautiful, or what Ruskin calls "holy" colouring, can only be produced by the use of the primaries, either side by side or in mixture. It must be remembered, also, that earthy pigments, however pure, are but poor representatives of the ethereal dyes, and that many things can be done with the latter which, owing to their imperfection, cannot be accomplished with the other. For instance, by means of a lens, we can reassemble the scattered rays of the solar spectrum and once more produce white light; but all the care in the world will not make a mixture of red, blue, and yellow paint, in the proper proportions, produce anything better than a neutral grey. The artist's palette contains only the dry bones of colour, which he can never vivify with the light of heaven.

Another phenomenon, curious in itself, and important as illustrating the action of colour upon our senses, is that displayed in what have been called the *accidental colours*. These show themselves in various ways. If the eyes are fixed upon

a red wafer upon a white ground, the wafer will appear bordered with a faint green—if the wafer be yellow, the border will be blue—if green, purplish white—if blue, reddish white —if black, by a vivid white. And if the eye be wholly removed from one of these wafers, and fixed on the white ground, it will there perceive a phantom wafer of the colour of the border which surrounded the real one. In these cases, as may be seen, the phantom colours are always the complementaries (or opposite) of the actual ones. A more complex form of this phenomenon is, that if, after looking for some time fixedly at red, so as to excite in your eye an aptitude to see in succession green, you turn your gaze upon a yellow, you will receive an impression resulting from a mixture of green and yellow,—the latter colour being modified by the phantom-supplementary of the red. A very interesting illustration of this law is furnished by the experiments of Mr T. Z. Laurence, which also satisfactorily demonstrate (what every one who has pressed his fingers upon his eyes must know) that sensations of colour may be excited altogether independently of any external colour-stimulus. "If, closing one eye (say the right), any highly luminous white ground, such as some portions of the sky on a sunny day, is viewed with the left through a dark tube, so as to exclude all extraneous light, after a little the eye will begin to feel fatigued, and a librating circular smoky spectrum will be perceived at the end of the tube. When the tube is laid aside and both eyes are directed to the sky, a similar spectrum will be observed, projected, as it were, on the surface of the heavens, but much darker. But if after a time each eye is alternately opened and closed, a rose-coloured spectrum is seen with the left eye, a pale-green one with the right. These appearances are seen still better if, instead of the sky, a white screen is used as the plane of projection in the second part of the experiment. At first an almost black circular disc is seen; this becomes lighter and lighter, till it is finally succeeded in the left eye by

a bright rose-colour disc, surrounded by a violet border; in the right eye by an equally bright green, with a rose border. These spectra sometimes appear as if upon the surface of the screen; sometimes, on the contrary, as if originating within the eyeball itself, and indeed may be even seen with both eyes closed. To see the above phenomena in all their intensity, a slightly different plan must be adopted. As the field of projection, a sheet of dead black paper in a dark room is to be used; the spectra then seen with either eye are the same, and their colours most splendid, both as regards brightness and tint. At first an emerald-green disc appears, surrounded by a narrow carmine, or, perhaps, more accurately, magenta border; the magenta tint is then seen to encroach more and more upon the green, till the whole disc is of the former colour, surrounded by a bluish-violet border; this last, in its turn, invades the magenta, till the final spectrum is of one uniform indigo-violet colour."

These curious phenomena explain many facts remarked by dealers in coloured stuffs, and often greatly inconvenience artists who, wishing to imitate exactly the colours of their models, work at them so long at a time as to become partially insensible to the true tones. The experience of dealers in coloured stuffs shows, that when a purchaser has for some time looked at a yellow fabric, and is then shown orange or scarlet stuffs, he takes them to be amaranth-red or crimson; for his eye, excited by the yellow, has acquired an aptitude to see violet, and in consequence all the yellow of the scarlet or orange stuff disappears, and he sees red, or a red tinged with violet. A second fact connected with the phenomenon of "accidental colour" is, that if there be presented to a buyer, one after another, a dozen pieces of red stuff, he will consider the last five or six less beautiful than those first seen, although the pieces be identically the same. "What is the cause of this error of judgment? It is that the eyes, having seen six or seven red pieces in succession, are in the same condition as if

they had been looking fixedly for the same period at a single piece of red stuff; so that they have a tendency to see the complementary of Red—that is to say, Green. This tendency necessarily enfeebles the brilliancy of the red of the later-seen pieces [by dashing it with green]. And in order that the merchant may not suffer by the fatigue of his customer's eyes, he must take care, after having shown the latter six or seven pieces of red, to present to him some green pieces, in order to restore the eyes to their normal state. If the sight of the green be sufficiently prolonged to exceed the normal state, the eyes will acquire a tendency to see red—in which case the last six pieces will appear more beautiful than the others." *

The leading fact involved in those singular phenomena is, that whenever the visual sense has been long acted upon by a certain colour, nature at once relieves and gratifies itself by calling up a spectral colour which is the harmonious opposite of the one beheld. And this either simultaneously (as a fringe round the object, if it be small, or by blending with and modifying its hue, if large)—or in succession, after the coloured object is removed. These spectral hues, to use the common phrase, have no existence in the outer world; they exist only upon the retina of the eye, and are the result of the physical constitution acting in accordance with the wants of the animating Spirit within. I have no doubt, however—as the laws of Matter and of Mind are identical, and as the former always tends to produce what the latter naturally desires—that a similar phenomenon actually exists in the outer world, although too feebly to be discernible; and that the efflux of a certain kind of rays (say red) always tends to produce complementary vibrations (say green) in the surrounding ether. This is known to be the case with regard to Sound; for whenever any note is produced, the surrounding particles of metal or air always produce a series of complementary notes called the harmonics. Maupertuis long ago maintained that, after having listened to any

* CHEVREUL, *On Colours.*

note, the mind *expects* to hear one of the harmonics of that note. He was unquestionably right; and if he had said that the mind actually does, in certain cases, hear in imagination the expected note, and is all the more shocked when a wrong note comes, he would have been still more correct. In optics, as we have seen, this mental process is most apparent,—any given colour never failing to excite on the retina, and suggest to the mind, a colour which is the harmonious complementary of the one beheld. Thus, in Colour, we have the Law of Sympathy or Harmony made visible in its operation on the *mind*, while in Sound we have it made most perceptible in the *outer world;* but I entertain no doubt that its operation in both cases is at once physical and metaphysical, influencing alike the nature without and the nature within.

That pressure upon the eye produces spectral colours, and that a sharp blow upon it makes us fancy we see a flash of light, is a fact known to everybody—but, like many another everyday phenomenon, its explanation has a good deal puzzled philosophers. Goethe attempted to explain it by the hypothesis that light resided in the eye, and came forth when thus strikingly appealed to; and Mr Field, taking fundamentally the same view, alleged that the eye secreted light, and thus gave it off. The real solution, as it appears to us, is much simpler than the conjectured ones. All sense of light and colour, as we have said, is produced by ethereal vibrations upon the nerve of the eye; and the explanation of the above phenomenon *is*, that by pressure or concussion, the optic nerve is set a-vibrating, occasioning a sense of sight in the sensorium and mind. The brain is carefully protected by the hard covering of the skull, but if its particles happen to be set a-vibrating by a sharp dingling blow, the same sense of sight follows,—as was recorded, for instance, in the case of the present Emperor of Austria, when violently struck with a poniard in the back part of the head by the Hungarian assassin at Vienna. In truth, all our sensations are produced by a vibratory motion in their respec-

tive nerves. The nerves peculiar to each organ, indeed, are susceptible of only one class of impressions—those of the eye, light and colours; those of the ear, sounds; those of the palate and nose, taste and smell. But this is simply owing to the fact that each requires a peculiar kind of matter to set it a-vibrating; and if any one substance sufficed to set all of these various sets of nerves a-vibrating, it would at once produce all their varied phenomena. There is one substance, and but one only, which has this power—namely, electricity; and its action, as is well known, actually does produce in all the organs of sense sensations peculiar to each: in the eye, a flash of light; in the ear, sounds; in the nose, an odour; in the palate, a taste; in the skin, a pricking feeling—all in the same person and at the same moment of time.

Several attempts have of late years been made to construct a true science of colour—an important task, which has been long impeded by the unfortunate prevalence of the false theory of Beauty, of which Lord Jeffrey was the cleverest expounder. The most elaborate of those inquirers into the nature of colour are Mr D. R. Hay—the appearance of whose *Laws of Harmonious Colouring*, more than a quarter of a century ago, first gained public attention to this subject, and who has continued to develop his views in later and more costly works,—and M. Chevreul, Member of the Institute of France, who has likewise directed his able and painstaking mind to this subject. This latter gentleman, who is favourably known for his discoveries in chemical science, was induced to devote his attention to Colour in consequence of his being appointed by his Government to superintend the dyeing department of the royal manufactories at the Gobelins. His work, accordingly, is purely scientific in its character, and by no means inviting to the general reader; but it contains a great deal of valuable matter for those who are employed in work which requires taste in colouring.

M. Chevreul's book, in fact, is an account of his researches on what he calls the Simultaneous Contrast of Colours. In his

preface he says :—"In endeavouring to discover the cause of the complaints made of the quality of certain pigments prepared in the dyeing laboratory of the Gobelins, I soon satisfied myself that if the complaints of the want of permanence in the light blues, violets, greys, and browns, were well founded, there were others—particularly those of the want of vigour in the blacks employed in making shades in blue and violet draperies —which had no foundation; for, after procuring black-dyed wools from the most celebrated French and other workshops, and perceiving that they had no superiority over those dyed at the Gobelins, I saw that the want of vigour complained of in the blacks was owing to the colour next to them, and was due to the phenomena of the contrast of colours." What, then, is this law of *simultaneous contrast of colours?* It is, that when we regard attentively two coloured objects at the same time, neither of them appears of the colour proper to it (that is to say, such as it would appear if viewed separately), but of a tint resulting from the proper colour being tinged by the complementary of the colour of the other object; and that, if the colours of the juxtaposed objects are not of the same tone, the lightest tone will be lowered, and the darkest tone will be heightened.

To explain. We know, from the phenomena of the spectral or "accidental" colours described above, that a *red* spot tends to diffuse over the surrounding space its complementary colour, *green*—

That Green tends to diffuse		Red
... Orange	...	Blue
... Blue	...	Orange
... Greenish-yellow		Violet
... Violet	...	Greenish-yellow
... Indigo	...	Orange-yellow
... Orange-yellow		Indigo.

Accordingly, if we place Red and Yellow side by side, we find that the red, losing yellow, appears bluer; and the yellow, losing red, appears bluer: in other words, the red inclines to

purple, and the yellow to green. If we take Red and Blue, the red will incline to orange, and the blue to green. If we take Yellow and Blue, the former will incline to orange, and the latter to violet. The fundamental reason of this phenomenon is, that each colour tends to diffuse its complementary hue over the colour or colours placed next to it. But this tendency is intensified by the physiological fact, that if any of our senses receives a double impression, one of which is vivid and strong but the other feeble, we do not perceive the latter; and that this is particularly the case when they are both of the same kind. For instance, if two knocks are given simultaneously at the opposite ends of a room, one very loud and the other weak, we only hear the strong one. Now, when red and blue are presented to the eye, the strength of the blue renders us insensible to any tinge of that colour which may be in the red, making the red yellower; and so with other colours. Nevertheless, the influence of this law in modifying juxtaposed colours must, we think, be little more than theoretical when compared with the far stronger influence exercised in this matter by the law of complementary colouring.

Having given some examples of the changes of tone produced by the juxtaposition of opposite colours, let us examine the effects of juxtaposition upon colours which are analogous.

1. Take Red, and place it in contact with orange-red, and the former will appear purple, and the latter become more yellow. But if we put the Red in contact with a purple-red, the latter will appear bluer, and the former yellower or orange. So that the same Red will appear purple in the one case, and orange in the other.

2. Take Yellow, and place it beside an orange-yellow,—the former will appear greenish, and the latter redder. But if we put the Yellow in contact with a greenish-yellow, the latter will appear greener, and the former more orange. So that the same Yellow will incline to green in the one case, and to orange in the other.

3. Take Blue, and put it in contact with a greenish-blue,—the first will incline to violet, and the second will appear yellower. But put the Blue beside a violet-blue, and the former will incline to green, and the latter will appear redder. So that the same Blue will in one case appear violet, and in the other greenish.

Thus, as M. Chevreul remarks, "the colours which painters term simple or primary—namely, Red, Yellow, and Blue—do, when placed in juxtaposition, pass insensibly to the state of secondary or compound colours. For the same Red becomes either purple or orange according to the colour placed beside it,—the same Yellow becomes either orange or green,—and the same Blue either green or violet."

Ignorance of this law of contrast has given rise to many a dispute between drapers and manufacturers. M. Chevreul had several instances of this in his own experience. Certain drapers, he tells us, having given to a calico-printer some cloths of a single colour—red, violet, and blue—upon which they wished black figures to be printed, complained that upon the red cloths he had put green patterns, upon the violet cloths greenish-yellow ones, and upon the blue orange-brown or copper-coloured ones, instead of the black figures which had been ordered. To convince them that they had no ground for complaint, M. Chevreul took the cloths, and surrounded the patterns in such a way as to conceal the ground; upon which the designs appeared as black as could be desired. And still further to convince the malcontent drapers, he placed some cuttings of black cloth upon stuffs coloured red, violet, and blue; whereupon the cuttings appeared of the same hue as the printed designs—*i.e.*, of the colour complementary to the ground; although the same cuttings, when placed upon a white ground, were of a beautiful black. In the models of tapestries for furniture we often err in the same way as these drapers did—namely, by neglecting to preserve a contrast between the ground and the dominant colour of the subjects placed upon it. For instance, if it is a crimson ground,

ornamented with a wreath of flowers, the greater part of the flowers ought to be blue, yellow, and white. If we place red flowers upon such a ground, they will tend to become orange rather than purple, and ought to have a fringe of green leaves contiguous to the ground. On the contrary, when the ground is of a greenish hue, red and rose-coloured flowers must predominate over the others; and when the ground is of the hue of dead leaves, the blue, violet, white, and rose flowers detach themselves completely.

It is important that painters should understand this Law of Contrast in colouring. Suppose, for example, a painter have to imitate two contiguous stripes of red and blue upon a white ground. He perceives them changed in hue, by the mutual effect of each upon the other,—the red becoming more and more orange as it approaches the blue, and the latter more and more green as it approaches the red; but if he understands the law of contrast, he will know at once how to treat the illusion, and will produce the true effect by making his stripes respectively of a simple blue and a simple red, reduced in some parts by light or by shade. Whereas, if he does not understand the secret of the illusion, he will proceed to paint the stripes of a greenish-blue and yellowish-red, and so produce a false and exaggerated effect, from not knowing that the greenish and yellowish hues of the stripes are merely the result of red and blue coming together, and that they will reproduce themselves on his canvass if he makes the one stripe simple red and the other simple blue.

Another point which it is most important that artists should bear in mind is, that if, after working long at one part of a picture, they turn their eyes to another part, that other part will not appear of its own colour, but of a hue resulting from a blending of the complementary colour of the first part of the picture with the actual colour of the second. For example, if they have been painting a lady's red mantle, and then turn to look at the face, the complexion will appear of a greenish hue,—

which if the artist ignorantly reproduce on his canvass, he will most grievously sin against the truth, and deservedly earn the grievous displeasure of his fair sitter. In truth, so important is it to thoroughly understand the action of the "accidental colours," that it is a fact that even artists who are gifted with a fine eye for colour will produce poor effects if they make their sittings too long at a time. An ignorance of this law, and a habit of long sittings (things which generally go together, for no one who understands the former will indulge in the latter), will produce even with naturally fine colourists a colouring dull and inferior to that of artists who, though less finely organised, give way more to first impressions; or in other words, who take in the impression of the model more rapidly, before their eye has had time to become fatigued, and who do not too frequently return to their work to modify it, to efface, and to repaint,—a process which infallibly produces a poor effect, and makes the colouring "muddled." It is good for artists, then, as well as for other men, to know to "let well alone;" and by some members of the profession, the maxim is much needed.

We do not generally make a sufficient use of colour as a beautifier of our dwellings. This is partly owing to the fact that the physical organisation of Northern nations is not so susceptible to the impressions of colour as is that of Southern nations, even though these latter be intellectually our inferiors. It is in Tropical countries, where light is most dazzling, that colour is most gorgeous and abundant. These are the native climes of the sapphire, the diamond, and the emerald,—of sunsets unspeakably gorgeous, and of night-skies through the azure of whose transparent depths the eye wanders upwards until it loses itself as if on the threshold of other worlds. The savannahs there are covered with perennial flowers; the pillared forests are linked in a maze of beauty by the scarlet and other brilliant blossoms of the trailers that hang in festoons from tree to tree; and the green mantle of earth flashes every-

where into colours beneath the flood of sunshine which keeps all nature a-pulsing to the rhythm of its subtle and inconceivably rapid vibrations. Colour, like its parent Light, dies away towards the Poles; and as the constitution of nations is ever in harmony with the region where they dwell, the susceptibility of us Hyperboreans to colour is far inferior to that of the race who produce the magic dyes of India, or the still nobler one who built the glowing walls of the Alhambra. Even our neighbours the French excel us in this matter; and it is not overstating the case to say, that there is no civilised people on the earth who do not equal or excel us in a taste and passion for colour.

We are too fond of paleness, colourlessness, in our interiors. We shrink from bright colours, because we do not know how to use them, and believe we show taste when we have produced an effect which is simply commonplace. With M. Chevreul for guide, let us offer a word or two upon this subject. We shall begin with the more grand and artistic parts of a mansion, and then come quickly down to remarks which may be as interesting to the single gentleman with his triplet of rooms in the Temple, as to the more stately occupants of palatial edifices.

Enter a gallery of sculpture, and see what hints about colour there suggest themselves. Here we have our old friend the Venus de Medici,—showing the perfection of physical beauty, but with as little as possible of the divine either in her head or attitude. Next to her, in not uncongenial contiguity, is Dannecker's Ariadne on the Panther,—exhibiting a voluptuousness of position, combined with an exquisite charm in the undulating contour of the picturesquely *posed* figure. Here also is Kiess's Amazon in bronze—by no means a material for representing the soft figures of the female sex, but appropriate in this case, owing to the greater part of the composition being occupied by the rearing horse and attacking wild-beast, and to the circumstance of the attitude of the female rider representing nothing but masculine energy and daring. Finally, we

shall say, we have that divinest of statues, the Apollo Belvidere, in which life and noble power ray from every limb. Now, if those various pieces of sculpture are placed together, of course they must all be viewed against the same background—namely, that of the wall of the room in which they stand. But suppose—in order to bring out the peculiar qualities of various colours as backgrounds—it were proposed to us to take each of these sculptures by itself, and assign to it a wall of such a colour as would show it off to the best advantage. Then we would remark, in the first place, that whatever may be the case when a piece of cloth is hung immediately around a statue, the walls of a gallery must be considered as giving rise to effects, not of reflection, but of contrast. Accordingly, it will be found that statues of white marble or stone, as well as plaster casts, stand out well in a gallery whose walls are of a pearly-grey colour. But suppose we wish to attain effects not generally aimed at, with the several pieces of sculpture above named—then it will be found that if you place the Venus de Medici against a wall of blue-grey, the statue of the Cyprian goddess forthwith acquires a warm colour, which many sculptors prize so highly. Take the Ariadne, and place her in a room painted green, and forthwith the deserted of Bacchus flushes all over with a faint rosy tint, such as she is seen in her chamber at Frankfort, where the light is let in upon her through rose-coloured glass. For the divine Apollo, such tinting would be inadmissible. He must stand forth in the simple majesty of pure white; and in order to produce this effect, the colour of the wall should be chamois or orange-grey, which tends to neutralise any redness of hue in the marble or plaster of the statue. As to the *tone* of colour used upon the walls, *cæteris paribus*, it ought to be lower the brighter we wish the sculptures to be. Finally, coming to deal with Kiess's Amazon, and bronzes in general, it must be remembered that the metallic alloy of which they are composed yields two very different tints,—one *green*, which the metal acquires by exposure to the

action of the atmosphere; the other the peculiar *golden* tint which it possesses when not oxidised. If we wish to heighten this green tint, the colour of the walls of the gallery must be red; while, if we wish to bring out the golden tint of the bronze, the walls must be blue.

Let us turn now to a picture-gallery. Here the first thing that strikes us is, how badly paintings look when thus crowded together. Even supposing that they have been arranged by a man of taste, and that they are not too numerous to compel him frequently to do violence to his artistic feelings, still the ubiquitous melange of colour, and the dazzling headachy effect of the multitude of gilt frames, produce an impression upon the spectator by no means favourable to his appreciation of the pictures. In truth, it is only the intelligent connoisseur who, in such a case, can experience the effect which the artist has wished to produce; and this he does, not only by knowing the best *point* of view, but by fixing his attention so wholly upon the work as to be unconscious of the surrounding pictures, or even of the very frame. In fact, frames in general are no better than necessary evils; for, though they are requisite to isolate a picture from surrounding objects, yet the contiguity of the frame to the picture is exceedingly detrimental to the illusion of perspective. It is this which explains the difference between the effect of a framed picture, and the effect of the same picture when viewed through an opening which allows of our seeing neither frame nor limits. The effect then produced resembles the illusion of the diorama. In the case of not a few pictures, taste is best shown in knowing *how little* frame is necessary. The colour of the wall, and nature of surrounding objects, must be considered in judging of this. I remember seeing a painting by a German artist, which represented the interior of a Gothic ruin, with a snowy landscape visible through the open archway of the door, and some snow, drifted in, lying upon the steps and stone floor inside. The perspective was exquisite, magical; and the drifted snow upon

the steps and floor seemed as if you could lift it off with a knife. The picture was in the possession of an able connoisseur —and how had he treated it? Most people would have put round it a frame proportionate in value to the value of the picture: that seems to be the usual way,—so many inches of frame to a £20 picture, and so many more to one worth £100. Not so did this connoisseur. This gem of a painting had round it a simple narrow bead of gilding, and was hung upon a wall of an orange-cream colour—the unobtrusive frame allowing the exquisite perspective to appear to advantage, while the peculiar colour of the wall served to bring out, in all its brilliance, that other fine point in the piece, the snow.

With this warning against having too much frame—which cannot, of course, be shaped into any definite axiom, but which will answer the purpose if it makes people think at all upon the subject—let us proceed to consider the relation of colour which ought to exist between a frame and the picture which it surrounds. Gilt frames are, of all others, the handsomest and most generally applicable, and are especially suited for large paintings in oil. There is but one exception to the use of gilt frames, and that arises when the picture represents gildings, at least if so near the frame as to provoke the eye to compare the painted gold with the metal itself. For instance, there is a Gobelins tapestry, after Laurent, representing a genie, armed with a torch, near which is a gilt altar; but the yellow silk and wool in which this altar are executed, are entirely eclipsed by the gilt bronzes profusely spread over the mahogany frame by which the tapestry is enclosed. Bronze frames, on the contrary, which have but little yellow brilliancy, do not injure the effect of an oil-painting which represents a scene lighted by artificial light, such as that of candles, torches, a conflagration, &c. When black frames, such as ebony, detach themselves sufficiently from an oil-painting, they are favourable to large subjects; but when they are used, it is necessary to see if the contiguous browns of the painting or drawing do not lose too

much of their vigour. Many landscape-paintings in oil are well set off by a grey frame, particularly if we take a grey tinted with the complementary (or opposite) of the dominant colour of the picture. For black engravings and lithographs, gilt frames suit perfectly, provided a certain breadth of white paper be left round the subject. Frames of yellow wood, such as bird's-eye maple, &c., likewise accord well with lithographs; and it is possible greatly to modify the appearance of the drawing by mounting it on tinted paper, when we do not desire the effect of a white margin.

As to the hanging of pictures in a room, the rule is unquestionably right which says that engravings and plain lithographs should not be placed beside oil-paintings or coloured drawings. When we wish to place pictures upon a papered wall, the latter ought to be of a single colour, if possible—if not, of two tones of the same colour—and with a simple pattern. Also, the dominant colour of the paper-hangings ought to be complementary to the dominant colour of the picture. Pearl-grey, or normal grey a little deeper, is a good tint to receive engravings and plain lithographs in gilt or yellow-wood frames. Yellow hangings can receive with advantage landscapes in which greensward and leaves and a blue sky predominate; and the most suitable frames in this case are those of violet-coloured ebony, or wood painted grey or black. Oil-paintings, in gilt frames, are effective on walls of olive-grey; upon which ground the flesh-colours of the picture, and the gold of the frame, assort well. Papers of a deep green, and even of a deep blue, may likewise be advantageously employed in many cases. An artist of my acquaintance, whose drawing-room wall, covered with oil-paintings in gilt frames, has a flock-paper of deep green, the velvet pattern being of nearly equal extent with the smooth ground, but of a darker shade. The effect is very good. Had it been a picture-gallery, the paper would have been unquestionably better if of a perfectly uniform colour; but by having it patterned, and of two shades of the

same colour, the requirements of a drawing-room are answered with the least possible detriment to the effect of the pictures.

So much for the mechanical accessories of the Fine Arts, whether these be exhibited in a noble gallery, or in the houses of our middle-class. In coming to the furniture of our dwellings, it must be confessed that, so innumerable are the possible combinations of colour, it is impossible to lay down many laws of general application. In large rooms, bright contrasting colours may be employed—green and that ever-royal colour scarlet, for example; whereas in small rooms, the harmony should be not of contrast, but of analogy;—in other words, the furniture of small rooms should, in general, have but one predominant colour, and the contrasts exhibited be only those of tone. On this principle, hangings with varied and brilliant colours, representing flowers, birds, human figures, landscapes, &c., may be employed in the decorating of large rooms; whereas chintzes are only suitable to small rooms, such as cabinets, boudoirs, &c. In bedrooms, the window-curtains and those of the bed should be similar; and if there be a divan, it may be similar also; for we may remark, that it is conformable with the object of boudoirs and similar places, to diminish their extent to the eye, by employing only one material for the hangings and chairs, instead of seeking to fix the eye upon many separate objects.

Of hangings—and these remarks are almost equally applicable to the general tone of a room—we may say, that in consequence of an apartment never being too light (since we can diminish the daylight by means of blinds and curtains), it is best that the hangings be of a light and not of a dark colour, so that they may reflect light rather than absorb it. Dark hangings, therefore, are proscribed, whatever be their colour. Red curtains are to be met with very frequently in this country, and they certainly produce a sensation of warmth and comfort attainable by no other colour; yet red and violet, even in their light tones, are exceedingly unfavourable to the colour of the skin. Orange can never be much employed, it fatigues the

eye so much by its intensity. Among the simple colours, the most advantageous are yellow and the light tones of green and blue. Yellow is lively, and combines well with mahogany furniture, but not generally with gilding. Light-green is favourable, both to gilding and to mahogany, and also to complexions, whether pale or rosy. Light-blue is less favourable than green to rosy complexions, especially in daylight: it is particularly favourable to gilding—associates better than green, with yellow or orange-coloured woods—and does not injure mahogany. White hangings—or hangings of a light grey, either normal, or tinged with green, blue, or yellow—uniform, or with velvet patterns, similar in colour to the ground, are also good for use.

In regard to the draping of floors, it must be borne in mind, that for a carpet to produce the best possible effect, it is not enough that it is of the best manufacture, and of excellent colours and pattern: it is also requisite that its pattern be in harmony with the size, and its colours with the decorations, of the room. It is important for manufacturers to know how to produce carpets which will suit well with many different styles of room furniture; and the best mode of attaining this end seems to be, to make the light and bright colouring commence from the centre of the carpet; for it is there (that is to say, in the part most distant from the chairs, hangings, &c.) that we can employ vivid and strongly-contrasted colours without inconvenience. And if we surround this bright central portion with an interval of subdued colouring, we shall be able to give to the framing colours (those around the margin of the carpet) a great appearance of brilliance, without injuring the colour of the chairs and hangings. With respect to the carpets of small or moderately-sized rooms, we may lay down the rule, that the more numerous and vivid the colours of the furniture, the more simple should be the carpet alike in colour and pattern,—an assortment of green and black having, in very many cases, a good effect. On the other hand, if the furniture is of a single colour, or if its contrasts consist only of different

tones of the same colour, we may, without detriment, employ a carpet of brilliant colours, in such a way as to establish a harmony of contrast between them and the dominant hue of the furniture. But if the furniture is of mahogany, and we wish to bring out its peculiar colour, then we must not have either red, orange, or scarlet, as a dominant colour in the covering of the floor.

The covering of chairs may present either a harmony of contrast or a harmony of analogy with the hangings, according as the room is large or small; and a good effect may be produced by bordering the stuff at the parts contiguous to the wood with the same colour as the hangings, but of a higher tone. Nothing, too, contributes more to enhance the beauty of a stuff intended for chairs, sofas, &c., than the selection of the wood to which it is attached; and, reciprocally, nothing contributes more to augment the beauty of the wood than the colour of the stuff in juxtaposition with it. In accordance with the principles of colouring laid down in a preceding part of this essay, it is evident that we must assort rose or red-coloured woods, such as mahogany, with green stuffs; yellow woods, such as citron, ash-root, maple, satin-wood, &c., with violet or blue stuffs; while red woods likewise do well with blue-greys, and yellow woods with green-greys. But in all those assortments, if we would obtain the best possible effects, it is necessary to take into consideration the contrast resulting from height of tone: for a dark blue or violet stuff will not accord so well with a yellow wood as a light tone of these colours does; and hence, also, yellow does not assort so well with mahogany as with a wood of the same colour, but lighter. There is no wood more generally used by us than mahogany, and no covering for sofas and chairs more common than a crimson woollen stuff; and in this we are influenced not so much by any idea of harmony, as by the twofold motive of the stability of the crimson colour and the beauty of the mahogany. In assorting these, we will often do well to separate the stuff from the wood

by a cord or narrow galloon of yellow, or of golden yellow with gilt nails; or better still, a narrow galloon of green or black, according as we wish the border to be more or less prominent. The red woods always lose a portion of their beauty when in juxtaposition with red stuffs. And hence it is that we can never ally mahogany to vivid reds, such as cherry-colour; and more particularly to orange-reds, such as scarlet, nacarat, and aurora; for these colours are so bright that, in taking away from this wood its peculiar tint, it becomes no better than oak or walnut. Ebony and walnut can be allied with brown tones, also with certain shades of green and violet.

A well-known essayist, perplexed with the question, What is civilisation? at length inclined to think that the boarding-school miss was not far wrong who answered that it was "the last fashions from Paris." And really, if one consider what antecedents and concomitants these "*last fashions*" imply—what surplus wealth and abundance of skilled labour—what taste, what leisure, and what highly-developed social habits—even a philosopher may agree with the young lady's opinion. Unfortunately we cannot dogmatise much as to the coloured proprieties of this crowning product of civilisation, Dress. When it comes to be a nice question of shades and half-shades and mixed patterns, modified by the natural style of the person prescribed for, we lay down our pen and make a bow of confessed inferiority to the leading gentlemen of the cloth,—assured that even M. Chevreul, Frenchman and scientific colorist though he be, would feel it the height of presumption to dissent from the suggestions so quietly made by the "dictator of fashion" in Stulz's establishment. There is one remark I would make, however, which deserves to be noted by two numerous and very opposite sections of the community,—to wit, clergymen and lawyers on the one hand, and sportsmen and other cognate classes on the other. These gentlemen always, or most frequently, wear a one-coloured suit; the

clergy all black, and sportsmen plaid or mixtures of various kinds. This style of dress is often very pleasing to the eye, and recommends itself on various grounds; yet it must be remembered, that of all modes of apparel a one-coloured suit is the least economical. It presents no contrast of colour by which the leading hues may be kept in apparent freshness. Moreover a coat, waistcoat, and trousers of the same colour cannot be worn together with advantage except when they are all new; for when one of them has lost its freshness in consequence of having been more worn than the others, the difference will be increased by contrast. Thus, new black trousers worn with a coat and waistcoat of the same colour, but old and slightly *rusty*, will exaggerate this latter tint; while at the same time the black of the trousers will appear brighter. White trousers, and also ones of a reddish-grey mixture, will correct this tendency to rustiness in black upper clothes,—and indeed there is nothing like white trousers for making every kind of coat look well in its old age.

Civilians seldom indulge in much liveliness or contrast of colour in their dress, but the opposite is the case with military uniforms. In the French army the uniforms are especially brilliant,—almost entirely eschewing suits of one colour, except in the case of special corps, such as the Rifles. In this respect the French outfit is, we do not say better, but more economical than ours,—especially in our cavalry regiments, where the monochromic style of dress is not unfrequent. Let us take, for example, a uniform of red and green, like that of many regiments of French cavalry: by the law of contrast, the two colours, being complementary, or the opposite of each other, mutually strengthen one another; so that the green renders the red redder, and the red renders the green greener. Thus, a bi-coloured uniform, if the colours be complementary, exhibits, after a good deal of wearing, cloths which look quite as well as each did when new and viewed separately. Whitening of the seams—a disagreeable vestiarian phenomenon produced

by the surface, or best-coloured portion, of the cloth being rubbed off—is likewise much less apparent in a coat of two or more colours (*i.e.* braided or edged with a different colour from the ground) than it is in a monochromic coat; because the vivid contrast of different colours, fixing directly the attention of the spectator, prevents the eye from perceiving the inequalities which would be visible enough in a one-coloured coat. The same thing occurs, but in a lower degree, with uniforms of which the colours, without being complementary, are very contrasting. For example, blue and yellow, which accord well together, and are seen in the masses of yellow embroidery upon the blue of some of our hussar uniforms;—also deep-blue and scarlet, in which assortment is included the uniform of indigo-blue and madder-red of many French regiments;—also green and yellow, which form an association pleasing to the eye from its gaiety, and especially suitable for a cavalry dress.

It is not enough, however, to choose for uniforms colours which assort well: it is necessary, in order to obtain the best result, that we should employ those colours in certain relative proportions, and distribute them suitably. Thus, when one colour is in smaller proportion than another, it is requisite that it be distributed as equally as possible throughout the uniform: for instance, in the Artillery uniform of blue and scarlet, the latter colour, which is far from appearing in equal proportion with the blue, produces a very good effect when distributed over the whole uniform. Further, we must say, with M. Chevreul, "in a many-coloured uniform, where one colour is found on different pieces of the dress—on both coat and trousers, for example—we must take care that the colour does not cause the eye to confound contiguous or superimposed parts in such a way that a part of the one piece seems to belong to the other. Thus, some regiments of the French army wear with madder-red trousers a blue coat, the facings of which are of the same red: but what is the result? Why, at a certain distance, the red facings confound themselves with the trousers,—the skirts

of the coat appear diminished to their blue parts, and accordingly are judged too narrow. It would be easy to remedy this defect, by adopting facings of blue with a red edging." And we may sum up our remarks upon military facings and embroidery with two propositions: Firstly, that whenever the coat and trousers are of the same colour, and there is in the former a second colour which exists only in small proportion, it ought to be repeated upon the trousers in a broad stripe if the soldier wears boots, and in simple edging if he wears shoes. Secondly, that whenever the trousers are of a colour distinct from the coat (that is to say, different from what we regard as the ground), a stripe or simple edging of the colour of the coat will produce this colour in the trousers.

Colour is so intimately associated with beauty that we cannot possibly disregard it in its relations to the fair sex. Moreover, we would willingly, before closing, earn a meed of thanks from the ladies, if such be within reach of our feeble powers, by a few hints upon the coloured æsthetics of female dress. Here, still more emphatically than in the male attire, we cannot enter into the minutiæ of costume. It is only in the matter of simple colour that we can assume to prescribe. In regard to the general assortment of colours in a dress, we have already indicated the true principles to be followed, in our remarks upon the effects which contiguous colours produce upon one another. What we would more especially look to now, is not the general costume, so much as that portion of it which surrounds or adjoins that star-point of every figure—that noble region where life and heart and mind all shine most conspicuously — the Face.

Now, there are two types of face, in regard to colour or complexion, in this country—namely, the blonde and the dark: the one with fair hair, fair skin, blue eyes, and rosy cheeks—the other with black hair, dark eyes, and brunette complexion. In the fair type, the various hues are all of the same class; and accordingly the harmonies of analogy predominate over

the harmonies of contrast. In the dark type the reverse is the case: in fact, the black hair, eyebrows, eyelashes, and eyes, contrast, in point of tone and colour, not only with the white of the skin, but also with the complexion, which in this type is redder or less rosy than in the blonde type,—and it must not be forgotten that when a decided red, like that of a brunette's complexion, is associated with black (as in her hair and eyes), the latter colour acquires an excessively deep tone, much darker than it really is. It is owing to the one class being pervaded by the harmony of analogy, and the other by the harmony of contrast, that the faces of blondes are generally characterised by softness and sweetness of expression, while brunettes are distinguished by brilliance and style.

In coming to consider what colours suit best in the head and neck dress of blondes and brunettes respectively, we find that general opinion confirms our fundamental principles, by holding that blue accords well with fair complexions, and yellow (apricot, for instance) and orange-red with dark ones,—these colours being respectively the complementaries or contrasts to the predominant hue in fair and dark complexions. We may add, that yellow and orange-red, contrasting by colour and brilliancy with black—and their complementaries, violet and blue-green, in mixing with the tint of the hair—frequently produce a good effect upon ladies of the dark type. But as an interesting study for ladies, let us give, in an abridged form, M. Chevreul's opinions upon this subject:—

"*Red* drapery:—Rose-red cannot be put in contact with the rosiest complexions without causing them to lose some of their freshness. Dark-red is less objectionable for certain complexions than rose-red, because, being higher than this latter, it tends to impart whiteness to them in consequence of contrast of tone. *Green* drapery:—A delicate green is, on the contrary, favourable to all fair complexions which are deficient in rose, and which may have more imparted to them without inconvenience. But it is not as favourable to complexions that are more red than

rosy, nor to those that have a tint of orange mixed with brown, because the red they add to this tint will be of a brick-red hue. In the latter case a dark green will be less objectionable than a delicate green. *Yellow* drapery :—Yellow imparts violet to a fair skin, and in this view it is less favourable than the delicate green. To those skins which are more yellow than orange, it imparts white; but this combination is very dull and heavy for a fair complexion. When the skin is tinted more with orange than yellow, we can make it roseate by neutralising the yellow. It produces this effect upon the black-haired type, and it is thus that it suits brunettes. *Violet* draperies :—Violet, the complementary of yellow, produces contrary effects; thus, it imparts some greenish-yellow to fair complexions. It augments the yellow tint of yellow and orange skins. The little blue there may be in a complexion it makes green. Violet, then, is one of the least favourable colours to the skin, at least when it is not sufficiently deep to whiten it by contrast of tone. *Blue* drapery :—Blue imparts orange, which is susceptible of allying itself favourably to white and the light flesh tints of fair complexions, which have already a more or less determined tint of this colour. Blue is, then, suitable to most blondes, and in this case justifies its reputation. It will not suit brunettes, since they have already too much of orange. *Orange* drapery :—Orange is too brilliant to be elegant; it makes fair complexions blue, whitens those which have an orange tint, and gives a green hue to those of a yellow tint. *White* drapery :—Drapery of a lustreless white, such as cambric muslin, assorts well with a fresh complexion, of which it relieves the rose colour; but it is unsuitable to complexions which have a disagreeable tint, because white always exalts all colours by raising their tone; consequently it is unsuitable to those skins which, without having this disagreeable tint, very nearly approach it. Very light white draperies, such as muslin, plaited or point lace, have an entirely different aspect—appearing more grey than white, because the threads, which reflect light, and the interstices, which

absorb it, produce the effect of a mixture of small white surfaces with small black ones. *Black* drapery:—Black draperies, lowering the tone of the colours with which they are in juxtaposition, whiten the skin; but if the vermilion or rosy parts are to a certain point distant from the drapery, it will follow that, although lowered in tone, they appear relatively to the white parts of the skin contiguous to this same drapery, redder than if the contiguity to the black did not exist."

In regard to ladies' bonnets, it is generally supposed that a great deal, if not the main part, of the effect is produced by the colour of the bonnet being thrown or reflected upon the face. M. Chevreul, after experimenting, in his usual painstaking way, with various coloured bonnets upon white plaster-casts, found that this was a mistake,—that the reflection, even under the most favourable circumstances, is very feeble, except upon the temples—and, moreover, that these reflected hues have always a tendency to produce, as they pass into the ordinary daylight, colours the very opposite of themselves; so that when rose-colour is reflected upon the face, a space lightly tinged with *green* will intervene between it and the parts of the face illuminated directly by the daylight. As for any reflected tints falling upon the face while the present fashion lasts, the thing is impossible; for the bonnets are placed so far off the face—or rather, we should say, off the head—that any reflected tints can fall only on the hair. Here is M. Chevreul's *catalogue raisonnée* of head-dresses in relation to fair and dark complexions; and it will be strange indeed, gentlest of readers, if you do not find "a love of a bonnet" that will just suit you in the list here presented.

FAIR-HAIRED TYPE.

"A black bonnet with white feathers, with white, rose or red flowers, suits a fair complexion.

A lustreless white bonnet does not suit well with fair and

rosy complexions. It is otherwise with bonnets of gauze, crape, or lace; they are suitable to all complexions. The white bonnet may have flowers, either white, rose, or particularly blue.

A light-blue bonnet is particularly suitable to the light-haired type; it may be ornamented with white flowers, and in many cases with yellow and orange flowers, but not with rose or violet flowers.

A green bonnet is advantageous to fair or rosy complexions. It may be trimmed with white flowers, but preferably with rose.

A rose-coloured bonnet must not be too close to the skin; and if it is found that the hair does not produce sufficient separation, the distance from the rose-colour may be increased by means of white, or green, which is preferable. A wreath of white flowers in the midst of their leaves has a good effect.

I shall not advise the use of a light or deep red bonnet, except when the painter desires to diminish too warm a tint in the complexion.

Finally, the painter should never prescribe either yellow or orange-coloured bonnets, and be very reserved in the use of violet.

TYPE WITH BLACK HAIR.

A black bonnet does not contrast so well with the *ensemble* of the type with black hair, as with the other type; yet it may produce a good effect, and receive advantageously accessories of white, red, rose, orange, and yellow.

A white bonnet gives rise to the same remarks as those which have been made concerning its use in connection with the blonde type, except that for brunettes it is better to give the preference to accessories of red, rose, orange, and also yellow, rather than to blue.

Bonnets of rose, red, cerise, are suitable for brunettes, when the hair separates as much as possible the bonnet from the complexion. White feathers accord well with red; and white

flowers, with abundance of leaves, have a good effect with rose.

A yellow bonnet suits a brunette very well, and receives with advantage violet or blue accessories; the hair must always interpose between the complexion and the head-dress.

It is the same with bonnets of an orange colour more or less broken, such as chamois. Blue trimmings are eminently suitable with orange and its shades.

A green bonnet is suitable to fair and light rosy complexions; rose, red, or white flowers, are preferable to all others.

A blue bonnet is only suitable to a fair or light red complexion; nor can it be allied to such as have a tint of orange-brown. When it suits a brunette, it may take with advantage yellow or orange trimmings.

A violet bonnet is always unsuitable to every complexion, since there are none which yellow will suit. Yet, if we interpose between the violet and the skin not only the hair, but also yellow accessories, a bonnet of this colour may become favourable."

As an important memorandum, it must be added, that, whenever the colour of a bonnet does not realise the intended effect, even when the complexion is separated from the head-dress by masses of hair, it is advantageous to place between the hair and the bonnet certain accessories—such as ribbons, wreaths, or detached flowers—of a colour complementary to that of the bonnet, in the way above prescribed for the violet bonnet; and the same colour must also be placed on the outside of the bonnet.

These hints, thus thrown out primarily for the benefit of the ladies, are calculated to be of use also to portrait-painters,—to that class of artists whose peculiar province and happy fortune it is to copy and transmit to posterity those types of female loveliness which, in the richness of bodily presence, earth can but retain for a too brief season. The method of bringing out a colour by contrast, ought in a peculiar manner to fix the

attention of such artists. Many a lady's portrait has been spoiled, and a poor instead of a lovely effect produced, from a want of tasteful selection in the colours of the dress or of the background. The first thing the portrait-painter has to do, is to find the predominating colour in the complexion he has to paint; and that once found, and faithfully reproduced on his canvass, he must seek out the accessories best fitted to give value to it. This is often no easy matter,—so many are the varieties of complexion, blending into each other by invisible shades, which lie between the two extreme types of dark and fair. No rule can be devised that will guide him here: the artist must be able to judge for himself. It is for him to judge whether the dominant tint of a complexion ought to be exalted, or diminished, or wholly neutralised. And if he choose to weaken it, he must judge also whether this will be best done by using a drapery of the same colour as the complexion, but of a deeper tone; or whether he should oppose to the complexion a drapery of its complementary colour, taken at a sufficiently high tone, so as to produce the effect of weakening at once by a contrast of colour and a contrast of tone.

Colour is so beautiful an object as to be specially suitable for being much used in the portraits of the fair sex, with whom beauty is almost always the greatest charm. But with men it is different. Thought, as old Anacreon long ago sung, is as much the characteristic of the rougher sex as loveliness is of the gentler one; and to represent the simple majesty of Mind, nothing is better than black or dark colours, which serve to concentrate the eye of the spectator upon the head alone. Indeed, as our farewell suggestion to portrait-painters, we would observe, that the attention of the spectator is always led away from the face in exact proportion to the number of colours and accessories in the rest of the picture. Hence the rule may be laid down, that if the model has a physiognomy which recommends itself neither by the beauty nor by the expression of its features—and still more, if there is a natural

defect to be dissembled or concealed—the artist ought to call to his aid every legitimate accessory, and all the resources of contrasted but well-assorted colours. But if, on the other hand, the inspired artist feel a purity of expression or loftiness of character pertaining to his model,—or if a face, to most eyes commonplace, strike him by one of those expressions which he judges to belong only to men animated by noble ideas in politics, science, arts, or literature,—then it is to the countenance of his model that he should address himself; it is upon it that he should fix his chief attention; so that the resemblance, and the feeling which guided his pencil, may be alike conspicuous in his picture. Everything being subordinate to the physiognomy, the drapery should be of black or sombre colours; and if any ornaments are introduced for the sake of relief, they ought to be of the simplest and most apposite kind. Vandyck may be accepted as a master in this style of portrait-painting; and our artists of the present day, who are so fond of seeking extraordinary effects of light and shade, and of giving to vulgar persons a heroic attitude, or to commonplace countenances the pretence of profound thought, would do well to study the chefs-d'œuvre of that great master, and therein learn how infinitely better beauty may be produced by simplicity of means, by taste in the selection of the draperies and other accessories of the figures, and by attitudes which are not more invariably elegant than they are natural.

REAL AND IDEAL BEAUTY

BEAUTY is so Protean in form and character that it were vain to seek to describe or criticise all its manifestations. The emotions of Mind, the incidents of Life, the forms of Nature, the creations of Art,—in each and all of these does Beauty, like a bright spirit, at times incarnate herself: now beaming forth like an essence, felt but unseizable, in the wide sunny landscape, with its radiant hymen of earth and sky,—now appearing more definitely in flower or crystal, in the chords of music, the hues of the rainbow, or the glowing mouldings of the human form.

What, then, is Beauty? How are we to solve the mystery arising from the widely different forms and aspects in which Beauty presents itself? Is not a rose or a lily beautiful—or a landscape? Is there not beauty in a statue, a picture, a melody? Is there not a Moral Beauty and an Intellectual? Is there not also an emotional beauty,—a beauty of Association, by which the mind is affected when gazing on scenery suggestive of picturesque emotion—on ruins, for example—on spots memorable for thrilling events—in fine, on all things suggestive of high or pleasing thought? Unquestionably these are all forms of the Beautiful. Viewed in themselves, indeed,—and appealing, as they do, to different organs and faculties of our nature—we see no resemblance between a fine statue and a poem, between an old ruin and a pleasing patchwork of colours, between a charming melody and an elegant edifice; but when viewed in their ultimate

effects upon the mind, their mutual relationship becomes immediately apparent; and we recognise the truth that, however widely differing in character or appearance, all beautiful objects owe their power of pleasing to one and the same cause,—they delight us just in proportion as they approach Perfection: a perfection, indeed, finite and comparative only, as all things here are, but ever striving after that absolute perfection, which seems to flit at times, and for a brief moment, before the eye of the inspired artist, but which he is never able long to retain in his imagination or wholly embody in his works.

Is not Beauty, then, but another word for Perfection, alike in Truth, in Virtue, and in Art?

In every classification of the Beautiful, it must be borne in mind, first, that Beauty is, and must be, as diverse in its forms as the several faculties and organs by which the soul comes in contact with the outer world. Secondly, that these various forms of the Beautiful are naturally divisible into two great classes, which may be termed the Intellectual and the Material, —the former possessing no bodily shape (poetry, for instance), and appealing directly to the faculties of the soul; the latter exhibiting form, sound, or colour, and acting primarily upon the organs of the body. I beg attention to these two simple axioms, because they furnish a clue which, I expect, will lead us unperplexed through the labyrinth within which Beauty has ensconced herself, and in which, without them, we might, like others who have gone before us, lose our way.

The question, What is Beauty? rises on the very threshold of all æsthetic inquiries. There can be no science where there is no certainty; and if Beauty have not some stable and independent existence—if it be the mere offspring of Association, then any attempt to investigate æsthetics must be labour lost, and any attempt to lay down rules an absurdity. But this Association Theory, which Alison cautiously broached, and Jeffrey so mercilessly expanded, is it right, or is it not? Is it true that Beauty is dependent on no fixed principles, and is the

result of mere habit and association? To myself it appears strange that even a temporary ascendancy should have been attained by doctrines so palpably contradicted by the voice of consciousness, as well as by a hundred facts of everyday occurrence. How comes it, for instance, that a true circle is allowed universally—*semper, ubique, et ab omnibus*—to be more pleasing than one with an undulating or otherwise irregular circumference? Because, it may perhaps be answered, the one is perfect, and the other not. Granted;—but how came this idea of perfection into all men's minds alike, if not as a consequence of some standard of excellence universally existing in the human mind? Or, to take figures each entire, though differing in kind —how comes it that a hexagon is universally allowed to be more agreeable to the eye than an irregular polygon, unless there be something in the proportions of the one figure that harmonises better than the other with certain principles of our nature? Why, also, are some colours more pleasing than others? Place several spots of colour (say different coloured wafers) before any number of persons, and the result will be that some of these spots will be unanimously fixed on as more agreeable than certain others. As a mere question of colour, for instance, who ever preferred brown to pink? Or is any one so enamoured of the theory of Association and æsthetic Indifferentism, as to maintain that bulls are trained "from sire to son" in an hereditary hatred of red, because that colour affects them in a different manner from the others? In fine, show to a child a dandelion and a rose, and can there be a doubt as to which of these flowers he will prefer? I have heard of a child at a Sabbath school in one of our large cities, touchingly answering to a remark of his teacher's, that he must have seen flowers, "Yes, but never growing." And in the vast centres of our manufacturing industry, where, amid acres of brick canopied with perennial smoke, children are sold prematurely into bondage, and seldom stray above a few yards from their mill, it were no impossible thing to stumble upon boy or girl who has never seen flowers

at all. Yet even to such a one, present your floral pair, and see if nature, in that least tutored breast, is not wise enough to discern between the goodly and the mean—to beg for the rose, yet look uncovetingly on the dandelion.

In these instances, it will be observed, habit or association in nowise affects the judgment arrived at. I have taken Form and Colour in their most abstract manifestations—dissociated from any adjuncts or relations which might suggest other ideas (such as Fitness) than those peculiar to Form or Colour itself; and accordingly the judgment arrived at must be an instinctive one,—a natural emotion, not explainable on the ground of accessory or accidental influences. But if these instances be deemed insufficient, let me refer the sceptic to the more remarkable, or at least better understood, phenomena of Sound,—and ask him if he believes that any association of ideas will make a marked discord more pleasing to the ear than a fine harmony; or that the harsh, ear-splitting sounds produced by a beginner on the cornet-à-piston, will in any case be preferred to the same notes when played, on the same instrument, by a connoisseur in the art?

It would signify nothing to say, in answer to these facts, that exceptions exist to the rule,—that some one is to be found who prefers an ill-drawn circle to a perfect one,—some eccentric ear that is better pleased with the "Devil's March"* than with the glowing harmony of "Perfida Chlore;" or, finally, some bull that seems indifferent to the irritating influence of red. It is known, as a physiological marvel, that some eyes act abnormally in their judgment of colours, mistaking one hue of the spectrum for another; that to some rare individuals colour exists not at all, and red appears as grey; but it will surely be allowed that the seven colours hold definite places in the spectrum, and that grey is grey for all that. Neither is it to the

* I do not recollect whether this is the correct title of the piece. It is an old German air, intentionally full of discords, and has not inappropriately been nicknamed after the great Discord of the Universe.

purpose to say that some minds prefer the proportions of the Apollo, some those of the Venus, some Gothic architecture, others Grecian; that some like major airs in music, others minor; that some like one coloured harmony, some another. For of these things, each may be *perfect in itself*, and the difference consequently is not between good and bad, but between diverse styles of excellence. For example, a variety of coloured harmonies may be constructed, all equally correct, yet one eye may prefer one, and another another, according as the colouring is bright or subdued,—according as the harmony is composed of the primary, secondary, or tertiary colours,—or as blue, red, green, &c., forms the predominant and fundamental hue. The same thing may be said in reference to any differences of opinion regarding the relative merits of the Apollo, Bacchus, Venus, Hercules, &c.; for each of these statues is based on a scale of proportions peculiar to itself, and is perfect of its kind.

To illustrate this point better, let us transfer the case to Moral and Intellectual beauty, and all risk of misapprehension vanishes. We all know that some men prefer one style of poetry, some another; that many admire one kind of intellectual excellence, many another; and yet that each of these may be equally excellent of its kind. So, also, with respect to moral excellence, some prefer a Wallace dying for his country, some a Wishart for his religion, some the heroism of a Howard, others of a Galileo, others of a Francis Xavier; these differences of admiration being dependent on whether reason or imagination, patriotism, science, or religion, predominates in the character of the judges. Yet no one thinks of denying the essential excellence of each and all of these things. Moral and Intellectual beauty is displayed in them all, though one man may be susceptible to one kind of emotion more than to another. No doubt, even *styles* of beauty may be compared, and actual differences of merit may exist between them,—as, for example, between Gothic or Grecian architecture (a question which Mr Ruskin makes no difficulty about solving); but in such cases

judgment becomes more difficult, is influenced by natural temperament or warped by accidental associations, and higher æsthetic powers are requisite than fall to the lot of the generality of mankind. A similar vacillation of the judgment is observable in every branch of ethical or æsthetical science, whenever the objects compared approach each other in character or excellence, or depend for correct appreciation upon qualities but rarely possessed or acquired. And it ought ever to be borne in mind that it is not necessary, in order to prove a principle correct, that every deviation from it should be instinctively apparent.

Fairly to try whether or not Beauty is the mere offspring of Association, the experiments should be made, not between different styles of beauty, but between examples of positive Beauty and positive Ugliness, between Concord and Discord;—and when this is done, the truth comes out at once. Let any one listen to a false chord struck on the pianoforte, or intensified by an orchestra, and say whether it is possible for him to prefer it to the sweet music of the harmonic chords. Or try the experiment with Form and Colour. Take two sets of figures, composed of triangles, quadrangles, circles, ovals, rhomboids, &c., and let the corresponding figures in each set be similarly coloured; and it will be found that of the many different ways in which the coloured figures of each set may be arranged, some will be unequivocally pleasing, and some will be the reverse. Now, in this case, the influence of habit and association has no place, and every essential inequality has been eliminated. The figures and colours, in fact, of each set are identical; and if one arrangement be more pleasing than the other, the conclusion is irresistible, that there is some law of our nature which is harmonised with in the one case, and offended in the other.

It would be absurd to suppose, indeed, that because we thus possess the capacity of certain æsthetic emotions, we are therefore to be exempt from every other principle of our nature, and

that our ideas of beauty are to be totally uninfluenced by our passions and habits of thought. This—with all deference to the supporters of the association theory—would be to expect impossibilities. No single quality of the human mind can possibly act, for any length of time, independently of the others; and it would be as uncalled-for as erroneous to claim for the æsthetic faculty a freedom from rival influences which no part of our mental constitution is either designed or permitted to possess. The operation of those disturbing influences becomes especially marked when we descend from the region of Fine Art, where Beauty reigns supreme, into a field where the element of Beauty becomes more and more subsidiary to that of Fitness, until the Æsthetic principle is lost in the Utilitarian. So, also, in the domain of Fashion,—where love of novelty, and the example of others, exert an equal influence with the dictates of beauty. In those mixed fields, where Novelty, Example, Usefulness, &c. co-exist with, and may each in turn tyrannise over Beauty, a difference of tastes is the most natural thing in the world; and therefore the mixed and fluctuating phenomena of Fitness or Fashion can never yield reliable indications of what is absolutely beautiful. In Music, again, of two melodies not very diverse in merit, the worse may be preferred even by a tolerable critic, in consequence of the pleasing memories with which in his mind it may be associated, or for the sake of the pretty lips by which it may be sung. Nay, I go further than this, and allow that, at times, the emotion of the beautiful is excited within us by objects which have no real claims upon our æsthetical admiration;—just as the lover frequently ascribes to the object of his adoration charms and graces which are invisible to every eye but his own. "The loved," says a true proverb, "are always lovely." In fact, provided one be in a state of enjoyment, however produced, he is inclined to regard as beautiful any objects of taste that may be presented to him. This æsthetical phenomenon, it may be remarked, is a curious confirmation of my proposition that

Beauty is but another name for Perfection. For, just as it is the province of perfect objects to excite the emotion of the beautiful in the soul, so, inverting the process, it is the province of a perfect (*i.e.*, delightful) emotion, when existing in the soul, to invest with the attributes of beauty the external objects which meet its gaze. All our faculties follow the same course; and the explanation is to be found in a very comprehensive psychological law, in virtue of which the mind, when in a state of emotion, always tends to impute its own feelings to the external objects which surround it. Thus I by no means deny the great power of what may, more comprehensively than correctly, be called Association,—on the contrary, I most unequivocally acknowledge it; but because its influence at times overpowers our instinct of the beautiful—or, what is more frequently the case, makes us see beauty where beauty there is none—surely that is not to say that an æsthetic instinct does not exist, or that it does not unequivocally manifest itself in other cases. To do so were as absurd as to assert that Conscience itself does not exist, because its voice is unheard amid the storm of passion; or that murder is no crime, because there are tribes of men to be found "with whom revenge is virtue."

In truth there is a perfect analogy, I may say identity, between the theories of Beauty and of Virtue; and there have been quite as many opponents of the reality of an original principle of the latter as of the former. Both principles are manifestations of the Soul's longing after Perfection, and both are subject, like all our faculties, to the modifying effect of other influences. Both, nevertheless, lie deep at the root of our nature, and in favourable circumstances pronounce with unerring certainty upon the qualities of the objects which excite them. Both need education to develop and improve them, and internal calm to let them guide us aright. They may disappear from sight during the ascendancy of some strong emotion, yet they lie within, ready to show themselves as soon as prejudice is removed or passion abated. "Virtue," says Dr

Brown, "is like the image of the sky on the bosom of a lake, which vanishes, indeed, while the waters are ruffled, but which reappears more and more distinctly as every little wave falls gradually to rest,—till the returning calm shows again, in all its purity, the image of that heaven which has never ceased to shine upon it."

The same fine simile illustrates the operation of Material Beauty as well as Moral; but with this difference, that whereas, in the case of ethics, an action is nothing of itself, independent of its motive,—in the case of æsthetics, a form, sound, or colour is less liable to such fluctuation. For this latter class of objects, besides their operation upon the soul, act upon certain bodily organs, whose sensations can never be altered, though they may be disguised or overpowered by the operation of other influences. Thus physical beauty is a sensation experienced by both parts of our nature—both the spiritual and the corporeal,—whereas moral beauty operates upon the soul alone. Hence, it might be expected that there would be fewer mistakes about physical beauty than about moral. The fact is not so, however; and the apparent anomaly is to be explained in two ways. First, because it is evident that the Deity has made those faculties to be strongest and most readily developed in us which are the most essential to our wellbeing; and accordingly, as a knowledge of the Good is more useful and necessary to us than a knowledge of the Beautiful, so the moral instinct of our soul is more uniform in its action than the æsthetic. Another and most important reason why our æsthetic emotions should be more vacillating than our moral is, that we are carefully educated in the one faculty, and left wholly untaught in the other. The elements and precepts of moral truth are taught to us at our mother's knee, and from our childhood upwards, "line upon line, and precept upon precept;" all our life through, every seventh day is wisely set apart for peculiarly refreshing us in the knowledge of its nature and requirements; and besides, we are

trained in a most practical manner in the knowledge and observance of morality by the stern requirements of the public laws. On the other hand, not to one man in a thousand are the principles of æsthetic truth even attempted to be taught. In fact, people have not yet taken the trouble to ascertain what those principles are! But educate the æsthetic faculty, and the result is really remarkable,—for you will see the trained artist start in horror at a single false note, and exhibit more unconcealable pain at an inharmonious sound than at a moral blemish. He may not be very sure that a duel is sinful, but he will have no dubiety as to the hatefulness of a false chord. The miseries of this class of men, in fact, when in unfortunate proximity to a hurdygurdy, or even when within earshot of a very tolerable street-organ, are so excessive as to appear ludicrous to the generality of people. For myself, although this excessive antipathy to street-music seems to proceed on a very unphilosophical principle — namely, rejecting a source of enjoyment merely because it is not so perfect as we could wish it — yet I shall not be so ungrateful to the "Fine Ears" of the profession as here to argue the question; seeing that, without this auricular over-delicacy on their part, I should not have been able to bring this paragraph to so logical a conclusion.

Two generations ago, the frigid and blasting breath of French infidelity swept over the learned circles of this country, and the Deity almost disappeared from our books as from our thoughts. Philosophy became heartless, and speculation shallow; secondary causes were alone regarded, surfaces were alone looked at,—and a soul in man or a God in the universe were things quietly sneered at in some quarters, and never brought prominently forward in any. The Association-theory of Beauty was the true offspring of such an age and such thinkers. Indeed, it was the only theory which could enable men to treat of Beauty and yet ignore God. It was asserted that mankind like or dislike particular things simply according as these

things are associated with something pleasant or unpleasant in their past experience. It was an anarchy-law of Taste. It made a chance medley of all the beautiful things in creation. But such was the spirit of the age. It would never have done in those days to speak of man's being made in the image of God, and, in virtue of that likeness, of his admiring especially those things (the Beautiful) which are stamped brightest with the Divine impress,—those flowerings of creation, in which man most recognises the perfections of the ever-blessed One who made both him and them. But the wheel has turned round. To an epoch essentially frigid, godless, and materialistic, another is succeeding which is more warm in its humanity and more spiritual in its aspirations and beliefs. Like the other remnants of that sceptical past, the Association-theory is withering-up, and by the time the rising generation reach manhood, it will have been consigned to the limbo of vanities. Recovering the use of its senses, the community refuses to believe that all colours and forms ought to be equally pleasing (or unpleasing) to the eye, and are so, except when their effect on us is altered by the influence of association. When we are told by some upholder of the Association-theory (repeating the flimsy dictum of Jeffrey), that pink appears to men lovely, not from its intrinsic loveliness to the eye, but merely because it is associated in our thoughts with the complexion of young and lovely girls,—we simply laugh, and inquire, Well, if the colour owe its beauty to association with the blooming maiden, what makes us feel the maiden herself to be beautiful? Is that "association" also?—and if so, with what? In truth, his lordship's dogma is wrong on the very surface; for when he says that objects are thought beautiful only when they are regarded as symbols of things pleasant to the eye or soul, he forgets that the Maker's work is no lie,—that Nature never symbolises the good by the bad, the dark by the fair, the lovely by the ugly,—that there is a constant and inseparable harmony in nature between the sign

and the thing signified,—in short, whatever symbolises the beautiful must itself be beautiful; and this, whether the symbol be a thought in the mind, an expression of the face, or some form and hue of nature or art. Lastly, when Lord Jeffrey tells us that mankind love green and blue simply because we are accustomed from infancy to see these colours mantling the earth or filling the sky, we irreverently laugh again at so shallow a reasoning, and inquire whether he thinks that any amount of habit would make us feel delighted with an earth and sky of everlasting scarlet—a colour which the human eye can bear only in small proportions? He might better declare aloes to become sweet, and assafœtida odorous, to mankind by dint of habit,—or expect fishes, by persevering efforts, to be able to make themselves at home upon dry land! No, no,—the green and blue do not delight mankind simply because we see them colouring earth and sky; say rather that it is *because* they are fitted to delight man that these colours are so made to predominate in the world which our all-wise Maker has placed around us. We do not live in a world of discords. There is a harmony between the constitution of Man and that of Nature —the qualities of the one suit the phenomena of the other; and whatever is most perfect (*i. e.*, beautiful) in the outer world excites the most perfect and delightful emotions in the soul of man. We have called the beautiful the "perfect," and what means perfect but divine? and what is divine but that which man feels to bear most brightly the impress of its Divine Maker? The beautiful, in short, instead of being, as the Associationists affirm, merely a chameleon-like phantasm, having no definite basis either in the soul of man or the nature of God, is a gleaming forth throughout all creation of the *specially* DIVINE —whether in the forms of nature, the acts of man, or the emotions of mind.

Apart from the indirect influence of the philosophy of his day, what helped to lead Lord Jeffrey so far wrong in his theory was, that he failed to perceive the distinction between Material

and Intellectual beauty, and hence expected that beauty which appealed to bodily organs should depend as much upon association as that which did not. This is about as absurd as to expect that because people often differ widely as to the merits of a poem, therefore there must be an equal diversity of opinion as to the taste of sugar. The kind of beauty he mainly looked at was the Emotional and Intellectual, and, hastily making a rule, he endeavoured to apply it universally. Without noticing the very diverse classes of beauty, he struck an average, and said, —"There are either fixed principles, or there are not,—and since we see that Beauty plainly depends oftener on Association than anything else, therefore we must believe it to do so, even where the reverse appears to be the case." It is only in this way that I can account for the startling dogmatism, so regardless of anomalies, and so opposed to the testimony of our sensations, with which Lord Jeffrey carried out his principles. His predecessors had used the Procrustean bed with gentle hand, but not a hair's-breadth of concession does he make from the preconceived theory with which he starts.

The grand error of Jeffrey was to mistake a part of the truth, and a very small part, for the whole. The whole portion of truth that there was, is, or ever will be, in his theory is, that mental associations do at times exercise a modifying influence upon the impressions produced in us by external objects. But this is not confined to the domain of the Beautiful,—it applies to *every* kind of acts, facts, and phenomena in existence, whether beautiful or ugly: And to make Association the sole power in æsthetics is not a whit more sensible than to make it equally supreme in physical science, and maintain that the whole objects in the world about us are devoid of any fixed character, and impress us in a manner quite arbitrary, because solely dependent upon individual associations! By means of a prism, you may throw all the colours of the rainbow by turns upon a sheet of white paper,—but does it cease to be white paper? Or by throwing a blue ray from the prism upon a

yellow flower, you make it for the time appear green,—but does the flower become green ?—or are mankind, whether scientific or not, wrong in still maintaining that the flower is yellow? Now, the influence of association acts just in the same way as the hue thrown from the prism,—namely, as a merely reflected and temporary light. There is a special colour and character in the object before the hue falls on it, and that special character remains after the borrowed hue has passed away; and even while the mirage lasts, comparatively few people are affected by it. That is all! But the Associationists, by an absurd vagary, chose to regard the exceptional reflected light as the true light for mankind. They mistook an exception for the rule,—and, hiding themselves in a dim corner of creation, wished to look at everything by the light of a prism, instead of by the full clear celestial daylight of the sun!

Even if it were possible to reject the testimony of consciousness, and the other obvious truths which we have already adduced, the march of scientific discovery would of itself render the Association theory utterly untenable. Experimentalists have succeeded in analysing the mystery of the monochord—the basis of all music, and of that far wider thing, all Harmony; they have microscopically inspected its complex and beautiful motions,—have traced up all musical sounds to their very cradle, and actually seen them springing like ruling spirits of the air from the sounding cord. The skill of a professional enthusiast (Professor Donaldson of Edinburgh) has presented the system of Harmonic Ratios visibly to the eye, and shown the supposed fancies of Pythagoras to be but a reflex of nature. But more than this: we now know not only the number of vibrations which pertain to each note in music, but we have ascertained that light and colour, also, are the result of a certain vibratory action. We know that each colour of the spectrum is produced by a velocity of vibration peculiar to itself, and that each of those coloured rays produces a different effect upon chemical substances and the growth of plants. Now,

what should these things teach us? Simply this,—that as each note acts in a different manner upon the ear and each colour upon the eye, as well as upon all matter generally, so the effect of each upon the mind, which sympathises with every impress upon the body, must be likewise different,—and this independent of habit or association. And thus knowing that the physical effects produced by each note or ray are different, it follows that a correspondingly diverse effect upon the mind must be produced in mankind generally,—else there can be no truth in physiology, and no common basis of sensation.

It is true that each note in the diatonic scale, and each pure colour of the spectrum, is nearly equally agreeable to the ear and the eye,—for nature, in its elements, has been so fashioned by its Divine Maker as ever to harmonise with the mental and physical structure of man; but when we depart from these elements, and produce mixed or artificial colours, we get into a sphere where instinctive preferences begin to be felt. Even the worst compound colour, indeed, when presented by itself, does not prove disagreeable to the eye, but simply less pleasing than certain others, and it is not until we come to combinations that positive dislike is experienced by the mind. If we present to the eye certain different colours, or to the ear certain different notes simultaneously, an instinctive preference for some of these combinations, and dislike for others, is felt, often in a very marked manner. And the explanation briefly is, that every combination of notes, or patchwork of colours, by sending off to the ear or eye a different *fasciculus* (if we may use the expression) of vibrations, *must* produce different, and consequently more or less pleasing, effects upon the mind; even as viands of different tastes, however agreeable separately, become unpalatable when presented in ill-assorted union. It is true that other influences, acting upon the mind, may sometimes counteract the effect of the influence thus produced through the medium of the ear and eye; but the general effect must be the same, and will show itself in every one as soon as ignorance

or local prejudice is removed, distracting passion stilled, and the mind poised in equilibrium.

It is on such principles alone that the universal and eternal admiration accorded to Grecian sculpture is to be accounted for. It is because those matchless works of art harmonise with fundamental principles of our nature. Nothing less universal and enduring than this could have maintained their peerless prestige throughout the revolutions of two thousand years,—amidst altered religions, altered politics, altered knowledge, altered habits, altered kingdoms; in fine, amidst an utter obliteration of all old associations, and an altering of the nations themselves, such as has left no single one in any degree what it was. Still, nevertheless, radiant amid the ruins of the Past, these divine statues live on; and the world still bows before them in as fervent admiration as when first they met the gaze of delighted thousands in the Agora of Athens or on the Capitol of Rome. How inadequate, then, to attribute an admiration so general, so fervent, so undying, to mere abstract reflections on the costliness and durability of those masterpieces, and to the high thoughts associated with the race who produced them!—as if our admiration towards them were but the result of a tardy process of frigid thought, instead of the rapid and joyous leaping forth of heaven-born instinct.

It would require the broad limits of a volume were we to attempt to lay down, and fortify by examples from nature and and the masterpieces of art, the actual principles of Beauty. I make no such attempt here. I may briefly observe, however, that the two grand elements in all Fine-Art compositions, are Unity and Variety; and that Unity *in* Variety—or in other words, Symmetry—is the first thing to be attended to in æsthetical science. Symmetry, or the love of order, is a principle which regulates the development of all our faculties, and consequently our sense of the Beautiful among the rest. Not, indeed, that symmetry is everything in Art. On the contrary, perfect symmetry harmonises so completely with our

mental nature, that its contemplation does not excite any lively play of the mind, and is apt to be monotonous. Its effect on the mind is simply a delightful repose; and it is by introducing Relief or Discord that that amount of variety and expressiveness is imparted which is necessary to keep a "thing of beauty" lastingly attractive. Nevertheless discords, although thus necessary in all the fine arts, must either, as in music, be instantaneously resolved, or at least be kept in careful subjection. Relief, force, and expressiveness may all be gained by a wise departure from perfect symmetry; but never can this departure be carried so far as to render symmetry subordinate in an edifice, or absent in a painting or overture, without the mind of the observer expressing its dissatisfaction. Our desire to view things synthetically, or as a whole, is an instinct which cannot be disregarded. When the mind experiences a difficulty in doing this,—when the several parts of an object or composition present a resistance to its synthetical or symmetrising power,—it imputes to such objects a character of force and energy, which purely symmetrical compositions do not suggest. But when unity is wholly wanting in a work which aspires to belong to fine art, nothing can atone for its absence: the mind, baffled in its instinctive efforts to combine the refractory parts in a whole, sees only discord and incompleteness in the object, and experiences nothing but dissatisfaction in itself. A picturesque landscape is the object in nature which exhibits beauty most divorced from symmetry; and hence picturesqueness has been not inaptly styled "a beauty of parts." But there is more in it than this; for a picturesque scene, however seemingly unsymmetrical, will be found, in its best aspect, to be symmetrised at least aërially, by the influence of light, shade, and colour,—which bind together the isolated beauty-spots by a subtle but most visible bond of union. The soul of landscape-painting lies in the perception and embodiment of such effects, and in thus investing the pictured scene with a spirit and glory which nature may reflect upon its archetype but for a

fleeting moment. In truth, a good artist courts such skyey influences as a poet courts the inspiration of the Muse; and will watch and wait for days for that "light from heaven" which is to render some favourite scene worthy of an immortality on canvass.

Turning from the wider field, I content myself at present with the inquiry, what are the principles of Symmetry in that kind of beauty which may be styled Material, and which constitutes the essence of all the Fine Arts except poetry? Every one acquainted with the science of music (or rather, we should say, with acoustics) knows that the basis of all harmony is the series of Harmonics, especially as represented by the Fundamental Chord, composed of the key-note or its octave, with its dominant and mediant. The same basis regulates also the charm of melody; for notes which please when sounded simultaneously, please also when sounded in succession. Harmony, in fact, is music at rest; Melody is music in motion; and the principles which regulate the former, influence, though less perceptibly, the latter also. Harmony is, comparatively, symmetrical beauty, and may be regarded as expressive of Symmetry. Melody represents the principle of motion and variety, and embodies the beauty of Life and Expression.

Well, then, all are agreed as to the fundamental principles of simple music—we know it as a fact; but *how* is it, *why* is it, that these fundamental notes are more pleasing than any others? Here we must dive a little into the arcana of the beautiful, and bring to light a simple mystery, which I believe has not yet been explained. The reader, however, need not be afraid of getting a trip into cloudland, or a dip into the vapour-bath of transcendentalism; for I trust he will experience, in this case as in others, that the deeper one goes, either in physics or metaphysics, the firmer the footing he finds, and the simpler the elements with which he has to deal.

These magical notes, then, what are they? It is a most

remarkable phenomenon in Acoustics, that when any musical note is produced, an attentive ear can hear a series of other notes sounding simultaneously, or in rapid succession, as the sound dies away. These are the Harmonics; and, as we have said, and as was to be expected from the Music of Nature, they form the finest of concords, and furnish a groundwork for all combinations of harmonious sound. Now, the first question that suggests itself is, How is it that these sounds, so universal, are produced? The answer is not difficult. In obedience to that law of Sympathy which pervades the universe, and which nowhere shows itself more strongly than in the influence of rhythm both upon animate and inanimate nature, every sounding body has a tendency to excite an identical velocity of vibration, and consequently an identical note, in all its own parts, and in any sonorous bodies which may be near it. Thus the pendulum of a clock at rest has been known to be set a-going by the vibratory influence of another which was in motion. I have observed, too, the globular glass-shades of a gaselier set a-ringing whenever a certain note was sounded by the voice; it was generally a high note—often the laughing shout of childhood. And if a sounding body cannot make all its own parts, or adjoining sonorous objects, sound in unison, it will cause them to vibrate in the most synchronous manner possible,—in other words, in such a manner that there may be the greatest possible number of vibratory consonances between them and it in a given time. Thus, failing to sustain a unison, a sounding body subdivides itself, producing in some parts new vibrations having a ratio of 2 to 1 to the original note—which ratio, next to a unison, gives the most frequent consonances; in another part in the ratio of 3 to 1, which gives the next best consonances; and so on, till the ear can no longer discriminate. This series of ratios, I need hardly say, cannot possibly be improved, for each of them gives the next greatest number of consonances to its predecessor. Thus, when a sounding body (a bell, for in-

stance, or the monochord) cannot sustain the vibratory impulse at first imparted to it, it breaks off in some of its parts into a doubly quicker but feebler rate of vibration (2 : 1); then to a treble rate (3 : 1); then to a quadruple (4 : 1); then to a quintuple (5 : 1); and so on, till the vibrations, or pulsations, growing feebler as they augment in speed, the sonorous body at length relapses into rest and silence.——Such is the series of Harmonics; and if we reject the intermingled octaves from it, which are just the preceding notes on a higher pitch, we shall see that the essential notes progress unalterably in the ratio of 2, 3, 5—the notes produced by which are called respectively the tonic, dominant, and mediant, and which, in union with the key-note, form what is termed the Harmonic notes in music.

Having thus seen *how* it is that these Harmonic sounds are produced in nature, the next question to be solved is, *Why* is it that the combinations of these notes give rise to the finest concord? There is no real mystery here, any more than in the former problem; but first let us venture a word or two on a subject which lies at the root of this, as well as of many other inquiries. Why is it that so many leading minds have attached a mighty significance to Numbers? And how is it that this old faith, of which Plato and Pythagoras are the best known exponents, instead of waning with the lapse of two thousand years, is now springing into new life, and assuming a definiteness and wideness of application at which modern inquirers stand amazed, but which are only a realisation of the sublime conceptions of those sages of the Past? The deeper modern Science goes, the more does it come in contact with laws which express themselves by Numbers. The more the human mind, passing by weary stages through an infinity of superficial phenomena, approaches the heart of things—the inner shrine of Nature,—Simplicity begins to dawn like a light through the maze, and by-and-by is itself seen to resolve into an embodiment of numbers. Numbers, in truth, lurk like a shaping spirit beneath

almost all the forms and phenomena of Matter. Cast your eyes up to the purple skies of night, and as you watch the stars and planets in their courses, Kepler will show you that their bright wanderings own the sway of numbers, and Newton expound how a numerical proportion marks alike the gravitation of worlds and the fall of an apple. Light and Heat, those life-sustaining and all-pervading forces of the universe, act by similar laws. And in Chemistry, the science of dead matter, which searches into the composition of all material things—air, earth, and water, rocks, plants, metals, and all that is therein—Dalton and his followers will show you that the power of Numbers is omnipotent,—regulating the organism of each, and being, in truth, the grand influence which makes one thing to differ from another. Turn to M'Cosh's elaborate analysis of the Typical Forms of Creation, and in that work, and still more in the profound speculations of Dr Macvicar, we find such astonishing examples of numerical order pervading all departments and shaping the forms of Nature, that we are irresistibly reminded of the saying of Plato, that the Deity proceeds by geometry. The Pythagoreans represented numbers, the significance of which is so clearly seen in music, as in some mysterious sense the principia of the Universe. They described numbers as being in the Divine Mind prior to the existence of the worlds,—as being used as a model or pattern (παράδειγμα) in the formation of objects,—and as that by which all things were brought together and linked in order.

Let us ask, then, Whence comes this significancy of Numbers—this grand part which they play alike in Nature and in Art? Their agency is marvellous, and has been called mysterious; and in more than one age and country, they have even been supposed to have a magical power. But the mystery connected with these hieroglyphics is not insoluble; and, when once explained, the truth will appear abundantly simple. Consider what Numbers are. Those hieroglyphics, the sole ones pervading modern languages, what do they express? Are they

not simply *symbols of Proportion?* And is not Proportion that quality by which all things fitly unite and work together, —by which Matter springs into shapes at once useful and comely—which characterises the motions of mind as well as the forms of matter—which in single objects is recognised as Beauty, and in the mass produces that Divine Order which pervades the universe? Numbers, then, are the symbols of Proportion, and proportion is the basis of Order and Beauty. Surely it is no wonder, no mystery, then, that we should find Numbers operating in all parts of a universe of which order and beauty are the prime characteristics,—since numbers are but another word for, an analytical expression of, that order and beauty themselves.

But the mystery is only half resolved. Besides the general significancy of numbers, there is the fact that certain numbers are so peculiarly significant, and exercise so important an influence, as to have acquired the title of "magical." 2, 3, 5, are peculiarly the mystical numbers, but all the numbers up to 10 have more or less claim to a similar title. Thus it is the lowest numbers that are regarded as mystical,—it is the lowest numbers that are most prevalent and powerful in nature. Does not this fact suggest the solution of the mystery? Since numbers are the symbols of proportion and order, the lower the numbers —is it not evident?—the more simple the proportion. And the more simple the proportion, the more readily is it perceived and acknowledged perfect by the mind, producing a feeling of order or beauty,—while, regarded as a cosmical influence, the more easily do the various elementary parts unite and work together in the fabric of creation. These lower or mystical numbers, then, acquire their pre-eminence from symbolising the most simple and perfect proportions. Take the numbers from 1 up to 6, for example, and arrange them as proportions. The simplest of all proportions, of course, is $\frac{1}{2}$, or, as it may otherwise be expressed, 1 : 2; and from this as a middle term, it will be seen, the proportions expressed by the adjoined

5 : 6
4 : 5
3 : 4
2 : 3
—1 : 2—
1 : 3
1 : 4
1 : 5
1 : 6

figures increase as they ascend to $\frac{5}{6}$, and diminish as they descend to $\frac{1}{6}$. The further the proportions recede on either side from 1 : 2, the less simple becomes the ratio, and the less readily is it apprehended by the mind; while the balance of parts, so grateful to the mind, becomes more and more destroyed,—on the one side, by the parts too much approximating, and, on the other, by their too widely diverging. Such approximation and divergence, when extreme, render the proportions not easily appreciable by the mind, and, when appreciated, not relished. Still more, in bad Architecture, for example, we sometimes meet with shapes and sizes which bear no definite ratios to one another at all!

Such, in brief, is the reason of the value of those "mystical" numbers in Art. Proceeding with our task, let us see how these numbers present themselves in the elements of Music, and note the manner in which beauty of sound is evolved from their combinations. It is well known that when a monochord, a bell, or other very sonorous body, is set a-vibrating, besides the strong note first heard, a brief series of others, rapidly rising in pitch and declining in strength, may be heard as the sound dies away. In the sawing asunder of stereotype plates, composed of type-metal, amid all the harshness of the sound, I have often been struck by the peculiar acoustic phenomenon of this kind. There is given forth a fleeting pyramid of sound, which, loudest at its base (producing the fundamental note), in disappearing becomes momentarily vivid at the tapering top; and so rapid and brilliant is the phenomenon, and so analogous are the impressions of the different organs of sense upon the mind, that the effect produced at times is as if the sounds, in flying upwards, vanished like a flash of light. The sound of the word "R*ing*"—which, beginning with a deep guttural, flies up into the highest nasal sound—is imitative of this phenomenon. Experiment has shown that the vibrations of the several notes of the monochord are in number respectively as 1, 2, 3, 4, 5,

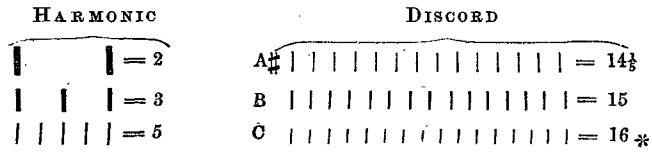
&c.—in other words, they stand to each other in the simplest proportions; and thus combine more perfectly than any other possible series of notes,—their blending vibrations having the greatest number of consonances in a given time. The leading notes of this Harmonic series, and those alone perceptible to ordinarily good ears, are (after the fundamental note) the octave, with its fifth, and the third of the double octave above,—*i. e.*, the notes which vibrate to the key-note in the ratio of 2, 3, 5,—the very numbers which have been regarded as peculiarly magical, which figure in the "golden rule," which will meet us again in Form, and which certainly produce the finest harmony in Music.

The notes in musical instruments are to some extent an artificial arrangement, adopted for convenience; but they are constructed with a reference to those laws of Numerical Proportion which we have seen to be the basis of harmony. Musical instruments are of all kinds—stringed, wind, or percussion,—harp and violin, trumpet and flute, piano and organ,—the only characteristic which they must have in common being the property of producing fine sounds. All sound is the result of vibration; but the vibrations must be somewhat rapid before audible sound is produced. Comparatively few bodies, as they exist in nature, are sonorous,—the component atoms of the majority vibrating too sluggishly to produce other than the mere dull rudiments of sound. And it is well that it is so; for otherwise "the air," as Caliban found it, would be ever "full of noises"—though not so sweet as those which haunted the Enchanted Island,—and we should be deafened or killed outright by the universal din. At the same time, most bodies may be *made* resonant,—Art can make even stones "discourse sweet music;" and it is not without an acoustic purpose that the soil of earth, like a vast damper or thick carpet, spreads beneath us to deaden the world's noises, and muffle the echo-voices of the underlying rocks. Sonorous bodies, properly so called, are those whose parts easily vibrate synchronously, so as

to give out clear musical sounds. The more rapidly they vibrate, the higher is the pitch of the note produced,—the slower the vibration, the lower the note: till they become imperceptible to the ear,—in the low notes by the vibrations becoming too dull and incontinuous, and in the high by their becoming too feeble to make an impression on the tympanum. Thus Sound, emerging out of silence, rises upwards till it vanishes into silence again. The key-board of our musical instruments is constituted by marking this inclined plane of sound or vibration at regular intervals,—producing first octaves, then subdividing these octaves into notes and half-notes (tones and semitones). Each half-note bears to its next neighbour a ratio of vibration (or pitch) of about 17 : 18—an $\frac{1}{18}$th being the smallest difference of pitch adoptable without confusion; and each full note differs from its neighbour in pitch (or rapidity of vibration) by about 1-9th. Such is the mechanism from which music is produced on a keyed instrument; but in producing the music, note the operation of numerical proportion. If you sound simultaneously two adjoining half-tones, discord is produced,—for the ratio of 17 : 18 is too close a one to be agreeable; and if two adjoining full tones are sounded (where the difference of ratio is 1-9th), the effect, though much better, is still not pleasing. But if you leave out adjoining notes, so as to simplify the ratio of difference, and strike C, E, G, and C octave, you will at once get good harmony; and on examination, you will find that these notes vibrate respectively to each other in a ratio of 4, 5, 6, 8,—thus producing the most frequent number of consonances. This is the Common Chord, which in the music of modern art bears the same pre-eminence as the audible Harmonics do in the music of Nature.

The Harmonics, as we have seen, have the still simpler ratios 1, 2, 3, and 5; and the pleasing nature of the Harmonic notes is just owing to their bearing to each other at once the simplest and the most perfect proportions (*i. e.*, ratios of vibration) possible; the first making two vibrations, the next in the same

time making three, and the next five; and so every second vibration is a consonance. Thus:—



It is perfectly plain that no other different ratios of vibration than those here given as "Harmonic" can yield so frequent consonances, or such equal intervals between these consonances and the dissonances—every vibration that does not sound in consonance being exactly half-way between each of those that do. In a discord it is quite the reverse; the consonances being far apart, with a series of dissonances between, which are most irregular in their occurrence—the vibrations of the several notes now approaching now receding from consonance with one another. The diatonic scale, upon which all our musical instruments are framed, is so constructed as to avoid bad chords as much as possible; nevertheless if the notes B and C, whose vibrations are in the ratio to each other of 15 to 16 (or, in keyed instruments, of 17 to 18) or any other notes between which there is only a semitone of interval, be sounded together, the ear will be most disagreeably affected by the sound produced.

From the preceding remarks and diagram, it will be seen that "a discord" is merely a relative term; that there is no distinct line of demarcation between concord and discord, and

* The varying length and thickness of the strokes in the "Harmonic" indicate, in an approximate degree, the intensity and duration of the vibrations in the respective notes. The slower and stronger notes keep sounding for a longer time than the more rapid and feeble (though more ear-piercing) higher notes; so that the stream of sound is as continuous in the first, which makes 2 vibrations, as in the last, which in the same time makes 5. In the "Discord" it will be seen that the note A ♯ does not make a consonance with B and C even at its fourteenth vibration: and, in fact, these three notes do not sound in perfect consonance until their vibrations amount respectively to 57, 60, and 64.

that the former merges into the latter just in proportion as the vibratory consonances become wider apart, and the dissonances less regular in their relative distances or intervals. It will also be readily seen how it is that Nature is said to love concords and hate discords, inasmuch as she adds to the sound of the one and diminishes that of the other; because each of the two or more notes which produce the former not only co-exists harmoniously with the others, but has a tendency to excite the others when not sounding, and consequently to strengthen them when simultaneously existing; whereas the notes which produce discord vibrate in an irregular and jarring manner, so that the vibrations of each interfere with and tend to nullify those of the others, even as irregularly-toothed wheels cannot work together, and quickly bring each other to a stand. At certain places in the passes of the Alps, if a horn be sounded, you will hear the notes echoed and re-echoed harmoniously by the rocks for a comparatively long time; whereas in other places, owing to a different conformation of the surrounding rocks, only a jarring noise is produced, which ceases immediately. This is a beautiful yet simple instance of the harmony established from the beginning between the constitution of inanimate nature and of man: the divinely-ordained laws of matter ever tending to swell and perpetuate what is agreeable, and to check what is offensive to the equally divinely-implanted instincts of the human soul. And the wisdom of the Divine Architect is herein, also, seen to be as conspicuous as his goodness; for the law of "least effort" prevails here, as in every other part of the universe; and all these sweetest of sounds are produced by the very simplest means and the least complex ratios. Thus is the very first element of Beauty seen to be Simplicity; and thus are we tempted to inquire whether other sources of the Beautiful are not dependent upon kindred principles.

Let us come to FORM. "I am inclined to believe," said the great Newton, "that some general laws of the Creator prevail with respect to the agreeable or unpleasing affections of *all* our

senses; at least the supposition does not derogate from the wisdom or power of God, and seems highly consonant to the simplicity of the macrocosm in general." Plato, the finest genius perhaps that ever existed, thought so too. Holding, by a sublime conjecture, that in the creation of the universe the Deity proceeded on what may be called the principle of maximum Beauty, Plato affirmed that the elements of the material world must be exquisitely beautiful. As triangles are the formative principle of all figures, and as all triangles result from two—the right-angled isosceles and the right-angled scalene—he contrasts these two, remarking that "the right-angled isosceles triangle has invariably one character only, but the Scalene has an infinity." And of all the many kinds of the Scalene, he prefers as most beautiful that which forms one-half of the Equilateral triangle, or a quarter of the Lozenge when that figure is intersected by its diagonals. In this triangle the angles bear to one another the ratios of 1, 2, and 3,—the longest side being twice the length of the shortest. The other model triangle of Plato is that which forms the half of the Square, containing the right-angle and its halves. These two triangles, deemed by Plato the most beautiful, comprise the angles formed by the right-angle and by its most simple divisions—viz., 90°, 60°, 45°, 30°, or 1, $\frac{2}{3}$, $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{1}{3}$. So that here we find the principle of Numerical Proportion regulating the simply beautiful in Form, just as we saw it regulating the simply beautiful in Sound.

When showing the influence of Numerical Proportion in the production of pleasant Sound, we fortunately had in the Harmonic and Common Chords a universally acknowledged standard to which we could appeal in illustration and confirmation of our views. It behoves us to find some equally good test in the department of Form. Fortunately this has been done to our hand, in the work of one to whom we love to be indebted, and still more to proclaim our indebtment; for, highly as his eminent genius is appreciated by a select few, we feel assured that his reputation is in extent far

below his deserts. Dr Macvicar, who, besides being one of the most original thinkers of the day, both in physics and in metaphysics, has from his youth been an ardent lover and connoisseur of art, has carefully investigated the question whether the æsthetic opinions of Plato were borne out by the practice of the Greek artists. "Having made a somewhat extensive survey of the figured works of the Greek artists which have come down to us," he says, "I have to state that every great work of ancient sculpture (in so far as it can be said to occupy a rectilinear area) is contained, as in a frame, by the Scalene of Plato itself," *i. e.*, the triangle which has for its angles 90°, 60°, and 30°, "or by some of its most simple combinations, or would plainly have been more beautiful had it been so." The Scalene, of course, may be presented in three positions. "As an example of the first, in which the longer of the two sides containing the right-angle forms the base, may be adduced that chef-d'œuvre of ancient sculpture now in the Capitol, and generally known by the name of *The Dying Gladiator*. As an example of the second, in which the hypothenuse forms the base, may be adduced almost any well-composed reclining figure, such as the beautiful composition in the Vatican called *The Nile*, consisting of the recumbent River-god, with a cornucopia in his reclining arm, and sixteen infants climbing about him; or those beautiful female figures, with infants in like manner disposed around them, which were found at Ostea, and are now also in the Vatican, one on each side of the entrance into the Sculpture Gallery. As examples of the third, in which the shortest side of the triangle forms the base, may be adduced almost all monumental designs in which only one figure is standing; and also those favourite compositions in which one figure, as for instance a warrior, is defending another who is fallen, and occupies the space about his feet and limbs,—of which a very beautiful example is afforded by the group recently executed by Alvarez, named *Nestor defended by Antilochus*. In basso-relievos, Canova seems to owe, at once

the extreme beauty of his compositions and their want of variety, to his strict and uniform adherence to the Scalene of Plato. As instances, may be mentioned his Crito closing the Eyes of Socrates—Mercury consigning the Infant Bacchus to the Nymphs in the Cave of Niseus — Hercules shooting his Sons — The Death of Adonis—his Dead Christ, with Virgin, St John, and Cherubs, &c. His finest basso-relievos, in fact, are all composed after the model of that ancient painting in the Vatican, known by the name of the *Nozze Aldrovandine*. Like that beautiful relic of antiquity, they all consist of a principal group, which is accurately measured by the Scalene and two accessories, one on each side.

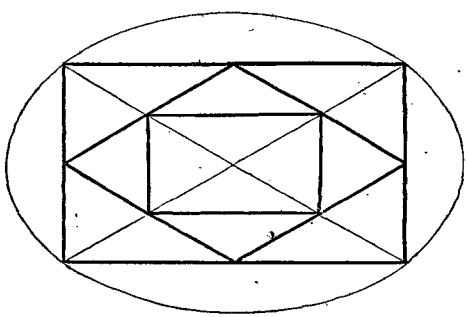
"After this triangle itself, its double, the Quadrangle (formed by uniting two scalenes by their longest sides) presents itself to our notice. Either in full face or in projection it forms the measure of all the most beautiful compositions in the fine arts. The Laocoon itself, in its principal point of view (that is, as it is presented to the eye in the Vatican, and as it is generally figured) is accurately measured by this quadrangle,—the long diagonal extending from the left foot to the right hand of the principal figure. The celebrated group of the Toro Farnese, at Naples, in its principal point of view, is also accurately measured by it. So is the beautiful Centaur in Nero Antico, with extended arm, in the Capitol; and so are Battles of Centaurs and Lapithæ, and indeed equestrian statues generally. A vast number of Thorwaldsen's basso-relievos are also accurately measured by it; and it is interesting to observe that this greater sculptor as generally composed in the frame of the Quadrangle as Canova did in that of the Scalene. In Painting, also, we have only to inspect the works of the best composers, in order to discover this quadrangle everywhere." But of the value of this form, and also of the Scalene, in Painting, ample evidence is furnished by Burnet, in his valuable *Practical Treatise on Composition*.

Since this law of symmetry, based on numerical proportion, shows itself so frequently in the masterpieces of sculpture and

painting, we should *a fortiori* expect to find it a regulating power in Architecture. Thanks to that indefatigable inquirer, Mr D. R. Hay, we are enabled to furnish as satisfactory proofs in this department of Form as in the other. In architecture, not triangles, but quadrangles, predominate; and Mr Hay not only lays down a grand principle for the construction and combination of the most pleasing rectangular quadrangles, but he has invented a useful nomenclature for the various figures in architecture, whether rectilinear or curvilinear. For example, the right-angled triangle whose smallest angle is 30° is called the "triangle of $\frac{1}{3}$," *i. e.*, of the right-angle; the quadrangle formed by joining two such triangles by their longest sides is styled the "rectangle of $\frac{1}{3}$;" and an ellipse which would inscribe such a quadrangle is styled the "ellipse of $\frac{1}{3}$." The triangle which forms the half of the square, and whose two smaller angles are 45°, is in like manner styled the "triangle of $\frac{1}{2}$:" it has as its corresponding quadrangle the square, and the square has for its corresponding curvilinear figure the circle. A quadrangle formed by joining two squares is called the quadrangle of $\frac{1}{4}$, and an ellipse which would inscribe it is called the ellipse of $\frac{1}{4}$. Triangles, quadrangles, &c., which do not arise from the simple divisions of the right-angle—such, for example, as are neither 1-8th nor 1-9th, but something between the two—are imperfect, and to be avoided.

All quadrangles spring from the union of two triangles; and in the formation of the rectangular forms of architecture we find that the favourite triangles of Plato again bear away the palm. The one, we have seen, produces the square; the other and more beautiful, besides producing the lozenge, the most beautiful of angular figures, produces also one of the most perfect of rectangular forms—namely, that which inscribes the lozenge, and which in Mr Hay's nomenclature is styled the rectangle of $\frac{1}{3}$. The most pleasing of all rectangular forms are the square, the double of the square, and two oblongs intermediate between the square and the double square. One of these intermediate oblongs is formed by taking the diagonal of

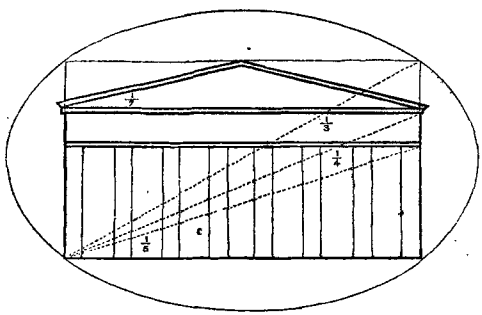
a square and one of its sides, and with these constructing a rectangle; the other is the rectangle of $\frac{1}{3}$, which seems to me the most elegant of all, and which not only inscribes the lozenge, the finest of rhomboidal forms, but is inscribed itself by a certain oval which seems to me the finest of all curvilinear figures. I present this figure to the eye of the reader, in order that he may see its curious and beautiful properties,—springing from and enclosing a number of beautiful Triangles (Plato's scalene, the equilateral, and the isosceles whose major angle is 120° and its minor ones each 30°); and also the Lozenge; besides being inscribed by the most beautiful of Ovals. The geometrician will observe that all the angles in this woodcut, as well as the infinite series producible by further bisection, are simply these four—30°, 60°, 90°, 120° = the right-angle, with its third above, and its two thirds below—representing the ratios of 1, 2, 3, 4.



"The basis of my theory," says Mr Hay, "is this, that a figure is pleasing to the eye in the same degree as its fundamental angles bear to each other the same proportions that the vibrations bear to one another in a chord of music." This conception of an analogy between the elements of beauty in Sound and in Form has been the animating thought in all Mr Hay's elaborate investigations: and, succeeding at length in establishing this analogy, he has arrived at a system of Proportion which throws a most interesting light upon the old canons of classic art, and which is of great value to all students of Form, especially architects, of the present day. His theory,

in brief, is this: that all the parts which compose the façade of an edifice, ought to have for their shaping angles simple fractions of the right angle—such as $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{1}{3}$, $\frac{1}{4}$, $\frac{1}{5}$, $\frac{1}{6}$, &c.; that not only the grander compartments of the building, but the doors, windows, columns, and intercolumnar spaces should be regulated by this principle; and that in the observance of this rule, and in the arrangement of those perfect separate parts in an harmonious manner, lies the fundamental rule of architecture.

This principle applies even to Gothic architecture; for, although that style studiously breaks symmetry, especially in its minor parts, for the sake of expressiveness, the Gothic artist must first know well the symmetrical plan of his work before he can break it with artistic effect. But in the architecture of the Greeks, where purest symmetry was aimed at, Mr Hay may find for himself a succession of triumphs. If we



take that masterpiece of Grecian architecture, the PARTHENON of Athens, we find that is a most perfect embodiment and illustration of Mr Hay's principles. This instance is a most valuable one, for the fundamental proportions of that peerless edifice are distinctly marked and cannot be cavilled about. The principal front of the temple, as every one knows, is constituted of three prominent compartments—the columnar portion, the entablature, and the tympanum; and in remarkable confirmation of Mr Hay's theory, the oblong which would inscribe the whole front is found to be a rectangle of $\frac{1}{3}$—the beautiful oblong of which we have already spoken: the columns and

entablature taken together, form a rectangle of $\frac{1}{4}$, the columnar portion a rectangle of $\frac{1}{5}$, and the tympanum gives an angle of $\frac{1}{7}$ of the quadrant or right angle. The operation of similar principles—namely, the having the fundamental angle of each component part a simple fraction of the right angle, and consequently bearing to one another harmonious proportions, may be traced in every part of the edifice. Not that this system, nor any system, could of itself give rise to the Parthenon, any more than a knowledge of the simple elements of fine sound would suffice to produce a good melody, much less a Mozart's Requiem, or a Beethoven's Fidelio; but a conscious or unconscious adherence to these principles pervades alike these masterpieces of the sister arts, and is as visible in every part of the one as in every bar of the other.

To prevent a not unnatural scepticism, we may add that, in this case of the Parthenon, the correctness of Mr Hay's views has been fully established by the critical investigations of Mr Penrose. That gentleman, who had himself made a special study of that matchless edifice, was elected by the Institute of Architects to report upon Mr Hay's "Orthography of the Parthenon;" and, marvellous to say, it appears from his by no means partial report, that over the whole of the large surface of the façade the theory holds so astonishingly true, that only in two places do the actual and theoretic proportions differ more than half-an-inch! The measurement of a building by means of a cord, it is generally allowed, however carefully conducted, can only give an approximation within a sixth or eighth of an inch of the truth; but Mr Penrose, in stating the discrepancies between the proportions of the Parthenon, as required by Mr Hay's theory, and the actual measurements of the building made by himself, enumerates instances of variation not exceeding a fortieth, and in some cases so low as a five-hundredth part of an inch! The fabled fly on the cupola of St Paul's could hardly have been more microscopic in its criticism; yet it is this very minuteness that enhances the value of Mr Penrose's testimony. The discrepancies between the theory

and the fact, indeed, are so infinitesimal, that they obviously amount to nothing more than that element of practical incertitude which always prevails in materialising on so large a scale a mathematical calculation.

This perfect analogy between the principles of Music and the principles of Form, and the complete dependence of both of them upon the primal law of Numerical Proportion, is, we conceive, a remarkable truth, and one which cannot fail to be attended by wide and important results. It is one step nearer to the unveiling of a grand Law of Harmony which seems to pervade the universe.

The early and remarkable success which the Greeks attained in æsthetic science, under difficulties infinitely greater than those which beset such inquiries in modern times, is a fact suggestive of important reflections. Not to speak of the twenty centuries by which the world is older since then, during which physics and metaphysics have formed the subject of unremitting thought and discussion, it must be remembered that we have this immense advantage over the ancient philosophers, that we have merely to rediscover a system formerly known and practised, and whose splendid products still exist for our instruction. We have the science, in fact, still before us, embodied in stone and marble; and the only problem is—Given the results, to discover its principles. So that, for the one way of inquiry open to the ancients, we have two; and yet we have accomplished absolutely nothing in comparison to what was so splendidly accomplished by them.

In Greece, everything centred in philosophy. Physics and metaphysics, religion, ethics, and æsthetics, formed the *pabulum* of the philosophic mind of Greece. The grand first principles of things were publicly discussed and lectured upon, in such a way as to rivet the attention of every thoughtful man; and from these first principles many things in science were deduced which only modern experimentation could establish on an assured basis. The great centre-truth which was afterwards applied with such effect to Grecian Art, seems originally to have

been derived, like not a few other ideas of Hellenic philosophy, from the East. Pythagoras was the medium through which it was introduced into Greece. Educated, like the generality of his countrymen, in music and poetry, excelling in eloquence, and versed in astronomy,—bearing off the palm for wrestling at the Olympic Games when in his eighteenth year,—admired for the beauty of his person and the brilliancy of his understanding,—that remarkable man withdrew at an early age into the East, and became a favoured guest among the star-gazers of Chaldea and the white-robed priesthood of the Nile. There he searched deeply into the ancestral wisdom so carefully preserved, and not less jealously concealed, under mystic symbols, in those cradles of earliest civilisation; and on his return to his native land (about 520 B.C.), he brought with him, we are told, a system of Analogy, or key to all harmonious proportions. Certain it is, that he indoctrinated his disciples in a science of numbers, a system of proportions, of which the phenomena of the monochord were, if not the actual basis, at least a material exposition. Hence it appears to be a true paradox that, in Greece, the principles of Art were known before Art itself existed. It was precisely in the generation subsequent to Pythagoras that Grecian Art sprang into its heyday of existence. The "wisest of the Greeks" died in 497 B.C., and the very next generation witnessed the golden age of Pericles, with Ictinus at work upon the Parthenon, Phidias sculpturing the matchless statues and bas-reliefs, and Zeuxis and Parrhasius contending in glorious rivalry in the Agora of Athens. Pamphilius, we are told, charged his pupils a high fee for "lessons founded on an excellent theory;" and it is said of Parrhasius that he accelerated the progress of art by the purity and correctness of his designs, in consequence of his being "acquainted with the science of proportions." Cockerell has remarked that, in the Ægina Marbles, "a canon of proportion, and a system of anatomical expression, are observable throughout;" and Winckelman goes the length of saying that "it is probable that the Grecian, like the Egyptian artists, had rules by which not only

the greater but the smaller proportions of the body were accurately determined." Assuredly there was a type of face and figure which the Greek artists adhered to in their representation of the general man, as in battles, processions, &c.; and that the operative sculptors may have had a rule-of-thumb process for producing the proportions of this type, is possible. But further than this I cannot go: for every fine statue requires proportions in some measure peculiar to itself, and I do not believe that the infinite mouldings and subtle curves of the human body can be reproduced by rules. Nevertheless I think it is now beyond question that the Greeks were better acquainted than our artists with the different æsthetic properties of the various geometric figures, curves, &c., and that they had a science which aided them in determining the pose and grouping of their figures, and the proportions of their buildings. Indeed, after the discoveries of Mr Hay in regard to the Parthenon, we must accept as literally correct the statement of Vitruvius, when, after observing that "the several parts which constitute a temple ought to be subject to the laws of Symmetry, the principles of which ought to be familiar to all who profess the science of architecture," he says—"the artists of antiquity must be allowed to have followed the dictates of a judgment the most rational when, transferring to the works of art principles derived from nature, every part was so regulated as to bear a just proportion to the whole. And those principles were more particularly attended to in the construction of temples and sacred edifices,—the beauties or defects of which buildings being destined to remain as a perpetual testimony of their skill or of their incompetency."

That Philosophy should thus have been the mother of Art in Greece, and should have bestowed upon her a precious dowry of deductions to guide her future steps, may appear surprising nowadays, when science is so authoritatively divorced from æsthetics, and every principle is scouted unless it come in the form of an *a posteriori* reasoning: but it will not so appear to any one conversant with the character and objects of Grecian

philosophy. It was the peculiar genius and vocation of that gifted people to grasp the first principles of things, and so become acquainted with the leading truths of science, by a process of imaginative inference resembling inspiration. Grecian intellect had an unequalled keenness of eye for the analogies of things. The slightest resemblance caught, charmed, and fixed its glance; and the phenomenon of the Milky Way, backed by a few commonplace facts, is said to have carried the swift imagination of Democritus to the conception of the Atomic Theory,—a world-wide generalisation, embracing and depicting facts of which positively its framer knew no more than the schoolboy or the Helot, yet which, after twenty centuries of neglect and doubt, the hair-splitting science of a Dalton and Berzelius is at length placing upon an irrefragable basis. The mental development of the Greeks and that of the moderns took totally opposite courses, — each, however, supplementary of the other, and both leading from different starting-points to the same goal. Of the two great methods of scientific inquiry, the Ancients relied mainly on the Deductive system, the Moderns on the Inductive. The former, starting from principles, came down with eagle-swoop upon details; the latter, long groping among details, at length rises to principles. The former seized Truth while yet in the unembodied Idea, and by a brilliant but vague generalisation, applied it to the countless forms and phases of Nature;—the latter, gathering together a multitude of isolated facts in the outer world, sift them with patient industry, until, from the shapeless and perplexing mass, emerge the golden grains of truth. The one is a brilliant sovereignty of Mind, the other an intelligent worship of Matter. Bold speculation must always precede Experiment, before the latter can be turned to its legitimate account; and it should never be forgotten that the main value of the Inductive system of inquiry is, to test the results at which the mind has previously arrived by the method of Deduction.

We think this truth has been too much lost sight of in modern science, although it is notorious that all the greatest discoveries—from that of the New World by Columbus, to Le Verrier's planet and Newton's grand Law of Attraction—have thus been beheld from afar by the boldly precursive mind of the explorer. That Æsthetics have suffered from the too exclusive predominance at present assigned to the Baconian method of investigation, can hardly be doubted by any one who maturely considers the subject; and that the Platonic philosophy is likewise better fitted than that of Locke for the investigation of such principles as those of Beauty is manifest from this:—that whereas Locke's theory of the understanding practically regards the human soul as primarily a *tabula rasa*, whose subsequent ideas are the mere echo of the impressions of the outer world,—a reflex of the influences by which she may chance to be surrounded; according to Plato, she is a tablet legibly written on from the first,—a bright and thinking repository of ideas imparted, and qualities implanted in her, *ab ovo*, by her Divine Maker. And we must not forget that it is to the now despised deductive mode of conception that we owe that Ideal Beauty so finely embodied in the works of classic art, and the consideration of which we have reserved for this last stage of our inquiry.

That IDEAL BEAUTY, it has been often asked, whence came it? It is often maintained that this *chef-d'œuvre* of Art was produced by a mere consideration of the forms of external nature. But an average of humanity is necessarily an average of imperfections, and no one ought to be so absurd as to suppose that the ideal beauty of the Greeks was founded on so commonplace a basis. And even the Eclectical system—that of choosing the best points out of a multitude of fine forms—is inadequate to explain the acknowledged perfection attained to by the Greek artists. Firstly, because every fine face has an æsthetic *ensemble* of its own, which the alteration of a single line or feature would destroy; so that the mere collocation of

the finest individual features would result in nothing but discord. But secondly, even supposing that each style of countenance were carefully separated from the others, in such a manner that the best features of each would harmonise when combined (a not very possible supposition), still the result would be greatly inferior to the Ideal Beauty of the Greeks. In fact, to settle the matter, there are proportions in some of the Ideal countenances of Greek and Roman statuary which are never in any case met with in actual life. They have no parallel in living nature,—and so the eclectical theory falls wholly to the ground. A product can never exhibit a thing not in the dividend,—a heap of pure sand can never, when sifted, leave behind it a grain of gold; and in like manner, no æsthetic eclecticism in the world can ever give as its product a facial angle of 95° or 100° (as seen in the Elgin Marbles, and in the heads of Jupiter in the Vatican Museum), when no such angle of the face is to be met with in actual life. In fine, it will be found that we can no more extract some forms of Ideal Beauty from the forms of nature than we can make pure light by a union of colours; and the best possible result of the Eclectical system would fall as much short of perfect ideal beauty as the dingy white produced by blending together the colours of the spectrum falls short of the purity and brilliance of unrefracted light.

The true source or foundation of Ideal Beauty, therefore, it appears to me, must be sought for elsewhere than in the world of matter. It springs not from any mere inspection of external particulars, but from a comparison of these with the æsthetic conceptions within us, and a discernment of the true ideas of form with which the human mind is itself endowed. Our mental constitution and external nature are made for one another. A perfect harmony subsists between the macrocosm without and the microcosm within, and the laws of the one tally exactly with those of the other. Both, it must be allowed, are often imperfect in their working; yet the former longs for, and the latter

tends to produce, Perfection: therefore there is but one standard for both. It was a fine saying of ancient times, that "there is nothing noble in Nature but Man, and nothing noble in Man but Mind." And it was in strict accordance with this maxim, and with a deep feeling of the harmony subsisting between the soul and nature,—with a lively conviction that each of these co-ordinates reflects the laws of the other, but that the former is the more perfect mirror of the two,—that the Greeks proceeded in their creation of Ideal Beauty. They resolved to supplement the defects of ordinary nature by an appeal to the higher standard within. Seizing with admiration upon their highest types of physical beauty, they idealised them,* and so succeeded in imparting a degree of symmetrical beauty to the forms of Nature which the latter, though ever striving after, seldom or never develops.

If it be asked how the æsthetic principle of the Mind operates and manifests itself in the production of Ideal Beauty, we answer —In a twofold manner: the critical and the creative. When an artist, for instance—whether painter or sculptor—is busy in the work of conception, his Imagination is in full play, and summons up before his mind's eye a succession of forms,—each of which, consciously or unconsciously, he tries by the æsthetic faculty of his mind, and at length selects the one most in unison with his design: even as a musician selects, after trial, the most pleasing of a succession of chords. In this case, all goes on within the mind itself—Imagination supplying the objects, and the Æsthetic faculty making the choice. But let us see what takes place when the mind emerges from her own recesses, from the shadowy chambers of imagery, and comes into contact with some object in the external world—as, for instance, a statue. In this case—unless there be some unusually gross violation of nature—the imagination, acting in obedience to the æsthetic faculty, does not alter the fundamental style of the form set before it, but, accepting the general outline and expression of the statue, proceeds mentally to modify the defective lines or

* See also *infra*, pp. 133-5.

features until the whole aspect and contour is brought into unison with the mind's requirements, and until Imagination superimposes an airy image of the Perfect upon or around the solid lineaments of the Imperfect.

This might be called, for brevity's sake, the Law of Psychical Suggestion. But as I entertain a salutary distrust of all technical phrases—which generally do little more than hint at the thing signified, without in any degree describing it—I shall endeavour to find plain words enough in the English language to fully express my meaning. And although Ideal Beauty is a subject which is regarded as peculiarly belonging to the transcendental regions of philosophy, and has been discoursed upon with as much haziness as if it did actually belong to the most recondite arcana of mysticism, I do not despair of making it intelligible to the reader, since it is identical in principle with a class of the most ordinary phenomena of everyday life. Suppose we are reading a book, and come to an idea with which we cannot coincide: does not the mind forthwith set to work, and suggest thought after thought in rapid succession, until among the multitude presented we recognise the true one? Or suppose we are asking ourselves that question which every other day or hour demands from us an answer,—"What shall I do in the circumstances?"—and forthwith the various alternatives of the case pass in review through the mind, until the judgment selects that which seems to it the best. In some such cases, plan after plan may unfold itself within the mind, each with its long train of probable accidents and far-off results,—until the thoughts that thus glint through the light of the mind, like a flight of meteors in a November night, coming from darkness and going into darkness, may absolutely bewilder us by the multiplicity in which they appear. Or, leaving the realms of pure thought, let us think of things which have physical forms and qualities. Let us take counsel with ourselves, for example, as to the best shape or size for a dining-room table; or the best pattern for drawing-room carpet or curtains; or the best colour for a neck-tie; or,

more homely still, what we should like for dinner,—and forthwith tables of all shapes and sizes, and carpets, curtains, and neck-ties in goodly variety pass in shadowy review before us; while, if we chance to be particularly hungry, savoury dishes of all sorts appeal almost as strongly to our senses as if they stood arrayed before us on a *table d'hôte*. One article after another, in short, is suggested by the mind, until we make a choice. These things are familiar to all of us; and, in truth, the power of the mind to originate ideas, either of itself or in connection with some external object, is a matter of such hourly experience with every human being, as to need neither comment nor illustration. Nevertheless, as it is this self-same mental process which constitutes the basis of the beautiful phenomenon which we are now investigating, we must look a little farther into it.

When a lively idea of any object is conceived in the mind, we feel as if the object itself were in some way present and felt, and that we are mentally enjoying, suffering, or inspecting it. Every such conception which relates to material objects—such as a form, or colour—tends to produce a more or less vivid picture of them on our mental retina. Every one is aware, at times, but especially when our emotions are excited (or, in other words, when the soul is in lively activity), that we can and do see in our "mind's eye"—as Shakespeare said first, and as everybody says now—perfect likenesses of absent persons and places. But the imagination can go farther than this, and, dispensing altogether with the aids of recollection, can conjure up scenes, figures, or events which have no existence at all in the outer world. This is the faculty which the creative artist (ποιητης) employs; and the result is, as in the former case, an image impressed on what we may still call the mental retina, the vividness of which varies in intensity according to the temperament of the individual and the extent to which his mind is interested and his imagination in play. Almost every one, however mentally sluggish and apathetic, must be familiar with this phenomenon; and it is told of that most original of artists,

Blake, who possessed the imaginative faculty in a very high degree, that he used to be able to summon up ideal faces with such vividness, that he felt as if he beheld them in all the distinctness of objective reality—with all the life-likeness of flesh and blood.

Nor is this much to be wondered at, for this "ideal" image is, in truth, quite as real, though not so vivid, as any produced by external influences. The province of matter is to excite to action the Mind, and Mind in its turn reacts upon matter. The Soul, in fact, and the External World, are two poles of action; and as the Body is an intermediate organism, and medium of communication between them, it is acted upon by both. The sole use of external objects, so far as the eye is concerned, is to send a vibration or influence along the optic nerve to the brain, exciting in the soul an idea corresponding to the object beheld. But, dispensing with this process, by an exercise of its own native powers, the soul, as we have seen, can conceive this same idea for itself, independently of external assistance; and so the image is as truly conceived by the latter process as by the former, —although the image produced by external influence is the more vivid, because the soul, like everything else, cannot act upon itself with the same intensity as it is acted upon by other bodies. But there is more in the matter than this; for the soul can not only create images for itself, but it can impress these ideal images upon its enveloping organism. For, just as certain vibrations from without produce a picture on the retina, sensation in the brain, and an idea in the soul—so, reversing the process, an idea strongly conceived by the soul, excites corresponding visual sensation and vibration in the brain and nerve, and an actual picture on the retina. For example, when a man *sees* a statue, a vibration is sent inwards through the eye, along the optic nerve, to the brain; so, when he *thinks*, or conceives the idea of this statue, a similar vibration is sent outwards from the brain, along the optic nerve, until its delicate lineaments are depicted on the expanded surface of the retina. Thus—as

common consciousness, not less than science, teaches us—when we *think*, an exactly converse process is generated within us as when we *feel*. A feebler converse, it is true; for, in the state of health, our mental conceptions do not equal in force our physical sensations. But let the brain be inflamed, as in delirium, or become otherwise morbid in its action, and that feebler converse becomes equal in power to the most vivid external impression. It is *seen*—actually and unmistakably impressed on the retina, and *seen*—with every line as sharp and hue as vivid as those of an actual object; and thus a fiction, or rather creation, of the mind becomes an object of the senses.

This principle applies to all the senses — to taste, touch, hearing, and sensation generally, as well as to Sight. Any idea or emotion, strongly conceived, gives rise to a corresponding feeling, whether pleasant or otherwise, in the part of the body of which the mind is thinking, or impels our corresponding organs or whole bodies into involuntary action. The former of these subtle modes of action of the mind upon the body is too commonplace to need illustration; but the latter can be beautifully and with little difficulty detected, *inter alia*, in its operation upon our organs of speech. If any man, for instance, be repeating words to himself, or mentally framing his thoughts into speech, he will be conscious of a nervous sensation at the root of his tongue—a weak impulse playing upon, rather than directly affecting, the muscles of speech. If he become excited when thus engaged, this impulse will be strengthened so as to overcome even the coercion of the will; or if he become absent, it will forthwith form itself into mutterings or words. See that peasant, to whom reading is difficult, and with whom every syllable is laboriously impressed on the mind before the words can be mastered—how he reads aloud!—that absent thinking man, how he mutters and moves his lips as if in speech!—that startled or excited girl, how her feelings burst forth incontrollably into exclamations! This is a beautiful series of illustrations of the power of the mind

within influencing and producing involuntary action in its subordinate and obedient organism.

In the same way Imagination—the creative power of the mind—produces actual vibrations on the tympanum of the ear, and forms on the retina of the eye, which are distinct in proportion as the fontal ideas are vividly conceived, and which assume a character of actual objectivity as soon as the brain is over-excited by disease. This is truly the work of *Imagination;* but the vulgar attach to this phrase a meaning which science cannot homologate. Men are ever apt to deceive themselves by a juggle of words. A sensation is called Real when produced in us by the agency of Matter, and Ideal when produced by the agency of Mind; but both of these agencies are alike Actual, in their existence and in their effects. The body is a medium between the soul within and the world of matter without, and is acted upon by both. We call the influence of the one Imagination, and of the other Reality; but both are alike actual, and the influence of the former sometimes entirely obliterates that of the latter. Not to speak of the countless physical effects produced by the action of the soul upon its corporeal shrine (rejuvinating it with joy, depressing it with grief, disturbing it with passion), it is by Imagination that we hear the rhythm and rhymes of the poet's verse upon which we are only silently fixing our eye,—that we feel the effect of a piece of music without ever humming it over,—that we can see the features or hear the voice of an absent friend,—or, by reading a few descriptive lines, can follow the historian to his fields of fight, or the novelist to his scenes of utopian loveliness. See old Beethoven seated grey-haired at his instrument, rolling out magnificent bursts and sweetest cadences of sound, until all the air is undulating in unison, and your whole being moves rhythmically to the angelic strains. But lo! the next moment there is a clash, a horrid jar;—a book has fallen upon the keys. Yet the music rolls on: he does not hear,—he is *stone-deaf!* Is it possible! Why, then, does he play,

when music is an enjoyment of which he can now know nothing? Ah! there you err. It is music from within that now fills the old man with ecstasy. His soul is eddying with sweet sounds, for ever welling up like waters from a spring. He is composing; and sits down to the pianoforte merely for the sake of intensifying his own emotions. And though his hands be sweeping the sounding chords, he is listening to music more witching still — grander, orchestral — which the soul, at once composer and executant, is pouring most audibly upon his mental ear.

After these observations, we trust we shall not be unintelligible when, re-stating the matter, we say, that the æsthetic faculty, from whence springs Ideal Beauty, develops itself either critically, by forming a faint airy-like image of the Perfect around, or superimposing it upon, the lineaments of the imperfect; or creatively, by calling up image after image in the mirror of the phantasy or imagination, until the desired one present itself. There are various degrees of perfection or imperfection in this as in all our faculties. Nevertheless, just as the intellectual Conscience tells us what is True, and as the Moral one judges of Goodness or Virtue, so the æsthetic Conscience moulds, by the principles of beauty, the forms which through the medium of the Imagination are presented to the mental eye. To illustrate the process by a most simple case. Say there is presented to the eye a line on a black board stretching between two points, but not quite straight, —or a circle imperfectly drawn. Then forthwith the mind of the spectator says, "Not this line," or "Not that circle;" and in their stead an ideal line or true circle is conceived by the mind, and is drawn in the mind's eye. The same mental process takes place even in the most complicated cases of æsthetic judgment, but in a peculiar manner with all the regular geometric figures, — such as the hexagon, octagon, rhomboid, &c.; an imperfect form or group, or series of contours, or combination of sounds or colours, being no sooner

presented to the senses than the Soul, in virtue of a power bestowed by her Maker, conceives in her own depths, in her "chambers of imagery," a form or group, or whatever else it may be, of the same order as that which is given, but such a one as is beautiful (*i.e., perfect*) of its kind.

If we proceed to inquire as to the relative beauty of these ideal forms as compared with those of the outer world, it is plain at the outset that, as a harmony subsists between the Mental Economy and the Economy of Nature, the Mind works just as Nature works. The mere fact, therefore, of certain things being "real" is no proof of their superior beauty or perfection. The term *natural*, in its true sense, applies as thoroughly to the working and creations of the mind as it does to those of the external world. The question is one not of Mind *versus* Nature, but of the nature within compared with the nature without. And here the important question arises, whether Mind or external Nature actually *does* work best. That Nature, in her infinite variety of beautiful forms, far transcends the conceptions of any single human being however gifted, must be conceded at once; and also that there is a charm in Life which cannot be adequately represented in the dead material of sculpture. So that we do not question the sarcastic truth of Byron's couplet in *Don Juan*—

> "I've seen much finer women ripe and real
> Than all the nonsense of their stone ideal."

The question is, whether, with Nature's beautiful forms before him, the artist cannot idealise those forms into something which, in every respect but the dead material in which he works, is more beautiful still. Assuming, then, as we are entitled to do, that Nature and Mind possess equal powers of acting in agreement with their constitution, the question as to the comparative excellence of their products may be determined by the other question, Which of the two has the lesser obstacles to overcome in its working? The answer to this is, unquestionably, Mind; which can model and re-

model its creations without obstruction, and which has only Beauty to attend to; whereas, with Nature, fitness, and many other qualities, must often predominate, to the detriment of Beauty. The creations of the Mind, in fact, may be produced, selected, contemplated, improved upon, and reproduced in still nobler forms; and moreover, during their evolution, the creations of the Mind are free from those physical obstructions and conflicting agencies which Nature has generally to contend against, and which so often disfigure or prevent the full maturation of her forms. Does it not necessarily follow, then, that the mind of genius, in its creations of the Beautiful, can approach nearer to the perfection of beauty than Nature generally does, or ought to be expected to do? And is not this a conclusion to which a study of all ideal art inevitably leads us, whether we contemplate the masterpieces of Sculpture or of Painting, of Music or of Poetry? Even in landscape, where the infinite variety of Nature more especially baffles human conception, and where her wondrous loveliness most challenges simple imitation, did not the great Turner idealise his landscapes?—were not many of his landscapes ideal altogether? and did not his illustrious rival, Claude, idealise too?

Although these views may appear somewhat novel, I do not think that they stand in need of much further argumentation. Touching the doctrine most likely to be contested—namely, that of real *ideals*—I would simply refer any sceptic to a further study of Science, which will show him that these "ideals" *must* exist in the manner I have described; and to the testimony of universal Consciousness, which tells us that they *do* exist: we, in fact, being as certain that we have the power of mentally beholding an absent face or imagining a new one, as that we actually see with our eyes. And finally, we not only *know* that it must be so, and that it is so, but we *feel* it to be so. For whenever an outward object of art does not correspond with these "ideals," we unquestionably experience uneasiness or positive pain at the sight of the Imperfect thus

brought face to face with the Perfect,—and as unmistakably experience a sense of enjoyment and repose when the lineaments of the two coincide. There are, it is true, many reasons why this phenomenon, like hundreds of others discovered or undiscovered, should not attract much notice. Firstly, because it is at once so common, being in truth born with us, as not to arrest attention, yet so subtle as to elude ordinary investigation; and its influence is so much weaker than the impressions which we call Sight, that, when called up by an external object, the lines of the ideal form so underlie and nearly correspond with the stronger impressions given by the object itself, that they are but seldom consciously observed. Secondly, when the phenomenon is lucidly developed wholly by the mind itself, it will be found to require either such vivid and disturbing emotion as hinders all ordinary minds from the difficult work of introspection,—or such a clear, calm, and powerful concentration of thought as few persons (however little they may be aware of the fact) are capable of. The vast majority of mankind, as has been well said, "think only with a corner of their brain;" and it is a mere truism to say, that vague and unsteady conceptions can produce no better picture in the mind than the blurred traces in a photograph produced by the waving too and fro of trees. It is a rare faculty that of vivid conception—whether natural or acquired; whether enjoyed by instinct, or attained by a disciplined concentration of thought. Poetic minds are naturally the most vivid in their conceptions; for with them the soul is more awake than in common men,—acting with its full force, and proportionately affecting the organism. Every thought is with them a picture; and what is called word-painting is just a reading-off from the pictured tablets of the mind. With poets, abstract truths or emotions, which of themselves are formless, when presented to the mind start into symbolical pictures, or rather suggest such pictures. Hence that use of metaphor, so common in poetic or exalted states of mind. And hence also it is, that an

obscure idea often becomes so plain to the gifted poet, who in turn makes it plain to ordinary men by reading-off to them the pictorial embodiment of it which he has seen in his own mind. The Poet is the only master of that highest form of metaphor which, as has been well said, "is not a mere ornament of diction, but the living body, and almost itself the evidence, of the truth which it expresses." Of a truth he is that "maker" or "creator" which his name implies him to be, and can conjure up, in the mirror of the soul, in the recesses of his own mind, ideal scenes as fair, and life as sweet and true, as any that human eye ever beheld or human heart has throbbed to. Though blind as Milton, he still sees; though deaf as Beethoven, he still hears. Cut off from him the whole outer world, and in a moment he can create worlds as fair within!

Such are the general views which suggest themselves to me on the subject of Real and Ideal Beauty. Proceeding on the principle that Beauty is no mere fiction, but a quality of which the soul takes cognisance as certainly as it does of right and wrong, I have differed totally from the æsthetic theory which, if not still in the ascendant among thinking minds, is at least unanswered. So to have differed from able men would have caused me much regret, were it not that matters are at issue in this discussion which are of the highest moment to a right comprehension of Human Nature—or, in other words, of ourselves, our powers, and our duties. As an accidental fruit of the preceding pages, we are not without hope that they may suggest, if not the solution, at least the true path of approach to not a few mysteries besides those of Æsthetics. For the perfect harmony which we have been led to recognise as subsisting between the economy of Nature and of Mind, leads to the important practical conclusion, that the sciences of Physics and Psychology can be made mutually to assist each other, and that whichever of the two is the further advanced in any particular department can help to throw light upon any mystery in the other. As Schiller beautifully and profoundly says,

"With Genius, Nature is bound in eternal alliance,—
Whatever Mind has vowed, piously Nature performs."

Ere long, therefore, we hope to see the Deductive method of inquiry rescued from its present neglect, and the worship of the Baconian system moderated into a correct appreciation. It is only by a union of the two methods of inquiry, or rather by employing either alternately, that Inquiry can be rightly and profitably prosecuted; and unquestionably it is by such a combined process, however little people are aware of it, that all truly great discoveries have been and ever will be made.

If successful, moreover, our remarks have attained what we consider to be a far higher object than any connected with ordinary science—by furnishing another proof of the noble nature of the Soul; and by deducing from the domain of the Beautiful, one of the most striking testimonies to the soul's immortality of which any branch of science can boast. What was the whole philosophy of the Encyclopedists of the last century, or of the Materialists of this, but a fabric based on the assumption that the soul derives all its knowledge from the senses—that without them it cannot move or act—and, in fact, that apart from them it has no independent existence? Or, to come to the last step of this falsely-grounded logic—that Mind is but a name given to the ordinary working of our animal senses,—that it is but the bloom, the efflorescence of Matter, and perishes with that bodily organism whose fairest fruit it is. But how directly opposed to all this are the facts and principles upon which, we trust successfully, we have based our theory of Real, and especially of Ideal Beauty. For if there be an inner standard of beauty prior to sensation, must there not be an inner power independent of the bodily senses? And do not the still too wavering reasonings of Moral Philosophy in regard to Conscience derive from such considerations fresh potency and clearness? But more than this. For if the Soul can thus create for itself sensations similar to those derived from exter-

nal nature—if it can surround itself with scenes and objects, and live a very life of its own making—an inner life, too, of which the outer life is but the scaffolding and means of perfecting—is not this a noble, a crowning, and withal a most beautiful proof of Man's Immortality? Does it not at once remove all scepticism as to *how* the Soul can exist in a disembodied state, and give the best reason *why* there should be another world, in which that Inner Life may burst into beauty, even as the butterfly emerges radiant from the chrysalis? Nay, do not the principles which we have used in explaining the nature of the Beautiful, lead us still further than this, and not only show how the human soul can live and act after the body is no more, but how also that spirit-state *must* be a state of retribution; inasmuch as, the stronger impressions of earthly life being removed, the soul's thoughts and feelings are then a world to itself, and for weal or for woe become to it all-in-all. *Here*, the unhappiness of the soul may be overpowered by the stimulus of sensual pleasure, or forgotten amidst the engrossment of worldly pursuits; but, beyond the grave, its own happiness or its own misery reigns supreme—known and felt without a single distraction—an unbroken rapture or a consuming fire. One deduction more. As an outer world and an inner standard are given us here, in order that we may seek out, and educate ourselves in, the Beautiful and the True; and that by means of the Moral Sense we may try the varied experiences of erring and imperfect human life, and so find out what is really Good, what is in accordance or at discord with the soul's divine nature, what is to be sought and what to be shunned; even so—is it not evident?—when the body is removed, the Soul is deprived of its schoolmaster, and thereafter can operate but little change upon itself—capable of continuous progress in that character which it has acquired on earth, but not of change from good to evil or from evil to good—bowling along through eternity, upwards or downwards, according to the bias with which it entered the spiritual world — soaring for ever nearer and

nearer to its God, or for ever wandering further, like a lost comet, into the outer darkness.

In the middle part of this essay a very full exposition has been given of the simple elements of æsthetic Proportion, —partly because the basis of this department of æsthetic science, so much cultivated by the ancients, is now little understood, and also because it is susceptible of general and most beneficial application, not merely in works of fine art, but in the commonest erections of the architect, and in the many trades which have to do with Form, in which well-proportioned forms give a value to their productions without enhancing the cost. Hence, I think, the teaching of these principles, and their application in detail to architecture and other arts or trades, might be introduced with great advantage into our Schools of Design. Music, it is acknowledged, has its rules and principles, which are duly taught; it is not so with Form, —and thus the pupils are set to the mere copying of forms and parts and outlines, without knowing either why these are beautiful or wherein their beauty consists.

In the higher regions of art, also, such a system of Art-instruction would be of use, in enabling us to analyse the masterpieces of beauty, and so to discover wherein their true excellence consists. But here the province of Rule stops. Rule can test, but it cannot create. It may enrich the mind of the artist, by enabling him to understand Beauty, and so the more easily store his mind with the fine points of each composition, with the *crême du crême* of beauty, the honey of each efflorescence of genius. And it is of infinite use, also, in criticising our first sketches, and licking them into perfect shape. But in the sovereign work of conception it has no sensible place. Creation, with Genius, is an expansion, a flowing-forth, of the soul — when it takes heed of nothing but its own promptings, and bounds along without thinking how it goes. The more gifted and the more educated the mind, the more nearly will its impulsive course coincide with the perfect path of

beauty. But, until the work of creation be over, and the conception be complete, do not let rule sensibly obtrude itself, or analysis intermeddle. The mind is in a very different state when creating, and when criticising. In the former she is melting all her ideas into one golden stream, which she pours forth with a joy that takes note of nothing but itself; in the other she dissolves the parts again, to see what they are and how they harmonise. In the one case, she merely feels, as it were electrically, the quality of the glowing ores that are gushing through her; in the other, she puts them into a crucible, and tests them one by one.

I am very far, therefore, from over-estimating the value of rules. Nevertheless in the present temper of the times, when artistic license (thanks to the philosophers!) has been running riot, I desire to rescue the fundamental principles of Art from the fatal neglect into which they have fallen. Rules, in fact, are just a statement of certain processes by which Nature works within us and without, and the more of these subtle Protean principles that we can spy out and lay hold of the better. It was a maxim of Sir Joshua Reynolds, that "every opportunity should be taken to discourage the false and vulgar opinion that rules are the fetters of genius;" and every true artist will coincide with the remark. Great mischief, indeed, has been done by a frigid idolatry of rules; and it appears to me that in that very error, especially as exemplified in Poetry, — which last century became temporarily fossilised from a slavish worship, not indeed of art-principles, but of antiquated models,—lies the main cause of the present erroneous reaction. The greatest objection that has arisen, or which can arise, to rules has been from not knowing the right use of them; and I believe that the true way of reinstating them in their rightful authority is to show what is their proper province—what they can do, and what they cannot. Even in criticism, I incline to think that men often err from a misapprehension of the true use of rules; and

that one-half the blunders of good critics (of bad ones I need not speak) proceed from giving *at the outset* exclusive sway to the analytic power of the mind, instead of making it subsidiary or posterior to the action of our sensational nature. When men set themselves to judge of a statue or of a poem, for example, they frequently commence the work of criticism at the very first glance or the very first line,—without previously allowing their minds to get a correct idea of the general scope of the work, or a natural impress of its qualities. The result of this inverted process of criticism is, that the critic is most likely never to *feel* the true spirit of the piece, and to be warped in his judgment of its general merits in consequence of fixing prematurely, in praise or in censure, upon some of its details. Were I to venture an opinion upon a point of so much delicacy, I should say that the true way of judging of a work of art is, first of all, to aim at obtaining a correct general impress of the object, by presenting the mind to it in a state of repose, free from introspection, and as nearly as possible in a purely sensational state—a mirror without dust or flaw, a blank sheet of paper, upon which the object may reflect or calotype itself in its natural aspect and proportions. Then, but not till then, let the analytic or critical power be applied (which manifests its operation by at once withdrawing the eye from the general surface and outline of the object contemplated, and, concentrating its gaze, sets it a travelling from part to part), in order to test the correctness of the idea previously obtained through sensation, and to see why certain parts offend and certain others delight us. The former of these processes is the emotional or natural one; the latter is the intellectual or acquired. The former can of itself convey to us a thoroughly correct estimate of the object contemplated, but it is an estimate that can be felt only, not expressed,—a testimony sufficient for the individual who experiences it, but worthless for others. The true critic, therefore, must be able to employ both processes of judgment; in order that he may test the verdict of his Feelings

by the judgment of his Intellect; and so be not only doubly sure of the accuracy of his verdict, but also be able to justify it to others, by giving the grounds upon which it rests.

One word in conclusion. While a knowledge of the principles of the Beautiful is thus useful to the Artist, as aiding him in his work, and interesting to the Philosopher as leaving one mystery the less in creation, it may also be a boon and source of happiness to mankind in general. When possessed of such a knowledge, observation acquires new quickness and power; beauties hitherto unseen spring to light, whether in Art or Nature; and we verify for ourselves the exclamation of Cicero—*Quam multa vident pictores quæ nos non videmus!* Our enjoyment of the beautiful would likewise be made more permanent. It is only when a thing is *understood* that it can be kept definitely, and for any time, in the memory; so that it is as difficult for one ignorant of the principles of beauty to preserve a mental vision of a work of art as it is to commit to memory a song in an unknown tongue. Finally, the power of analysing the phenomena of the Beautiful is greatly to be coveted, because, by so transferring the emotion of the Beautiful from the sphere of mere Feeling into that of the Understanding also, we filter the emotion of its disturbing qualities, and render ourselves longer sensitive to its delightful influence. We purge it from that agitation which always accompanies an uncomprehended emotion—which is, in fact, nothing else than the struggle of the mind to analyse its sensations, and which in certain temperaments assumes the form of a morbid sensibility. It has been said, indeed,

> "Men mar the beauty of their dreams
> By tracing their source too well."

But Beauty is not a dream; and with all deference to the popular belief, I must maintain that, though ignorance may prolong the excitement, it does not add to the enjoyment. I would rather say, with one who is as much a philosopher as a connoisseur of art, that "when there is only a vague sensibility to beauty, without any intelligible ideas about it to awake a

flow of ideas during the time of contemplation, such contemplation, what is it but mere staring?"

This much at least must be acknowledged, that by giving the emotion of the beautiful a place in the inner shrine of the Intellect in addition to its primal place in the sphere of Sensation, we render ourselves in a great measure independent of that sensuous susceptibility upon which the enjoyment of Beauty so much depends. He who feels beauty, but cannot intellectually recognise it, is ever dependent for this most joyous of emotions upon the vernal freshness of his senses; and as these grow dull, as youth flits past, the emotion of the beautiful gradually becomes a thing unknown. It is only through Feeling that æsthetic emotion can touch such an one; and how soon, alas! does this medium between Man and Nature, between the soul and external things, grow sluggish and torpid! But with him who has learnt to know as well as to feel—whose soul is one clear sky of intelligence—the case is far otherwise. Intellect brightens as the senses grow dull: and though the sensuous imagination pass into the yellow leaf as the autumn of life draws on, still will the Beautiful, having secured for itself a retreat in the Intellect, naturally pass into immortality along with it. Were this more generally the case, as Dr Macvicar finely observes, we should not hear poets closing up the bright song of genius at thirty, with strains such as those with which Byron closed Childe Harold's Pilgrimage:—

> "The torch shall be extinguished which hath lit
> My midnight lamp—and what is writ is writ.
> Would it were worthier! But I am not now
> That which I have been; and my visions flit
> Less palpably before me—and the glow
> Which in my spirit dwelt, is fluttering faint and low."

"An old man, with closed eyes and flowing hair, would again, as in the days of Ancient Greece, form the ideal of a poet; and the taste of the age of Pericles, enlightened by modern philosophy, and purified by Christianity, might again return." Higher objects even than these might also be obtained—but are not these enough?

SCULPTURE

"FROM a shapeless block of marble," says M. Guizot, "a Sculptor—possibly Scopas—brings into being that divine Apollo, whose beauty surpasses the beauty of any living thing. Thus, at the call of a man has a god come forth from a stone." Beautiful Art! Keeping in view its masterpieces, let us endeavour to note a few of its principles.

And first let it be said, that of all the Fine Arts Sculpture is the one most distinguished by SIMPLICITY. Unlike Painting, it deals with Form alone,—unlike Music, it is perceived all at once. There are no accessories of scene, and but little plurality of figures. There stands the statue, a simple human figure, carved out of cold lustrous marble,—if nude, so much the better, with nothing but its colourless self to tell its story, and move the soul of the beholder with the emotion of the Beautiful. What more requisite, then, than that this art, so chained to simplicity, should of all others be the most fastidious? It has little to work with; therefore—is it not evident?—that little should be first-rate. It has no incidents to move us, like Painting,—no brilliant vicissitudes to charm with, like Music,—no associations of princely splendour to impress us, like Architecture. It has but one power—the power of pure simple Form, with which to dazzle and charm the human soul; and therefore it is pure Beauty of Form that it should seek after,—beauty of the highest kind, and beauty alone. All else must be subordi-

nated to this. No discord is allowable in Sculpture. It is expanded compositions (works covering much space or time) that demand such departures from normal beauty; but a statue is a simple unit, which neither needs nor admits of relief, and which must be made thoroughly perfect in itself. Its beauty, therefore, must be symmetrical—*i. e.* perfect simple beauty; and as the perfection of this kind of beauty is seldom found in living figures, it can best be reached by a happy embodiment of the Ideal. Accordingly it was in their statuary that the Ideal beauty of the Greeks specially developed itself; and it is in the works of Flaxman and Canova, rather than in those of our painters, that the divine in *form* is still to be sought. "If Sculpture," says Diderot, "does not admit of a commonplace idea, no more will it permit of a mediocre execution; so that a slight incorrectness of drawing, which one would hardly deign to notice in a picture, is unpardonable in a statue." There is, moreover, another reason why Ideal Beauty (that divine supplement to the imperfectness of the Real), and excellence of every kind, should be the great aim of the sculptor. For a statue is a very costly thing, and the mind is naturally most intolerant of imperfection where the labour and expense have been great. It also follows from what has been said above, that a bad statue must of all things be the most useless. It cannot be redeemed, as many an indifferent painting is, by the beauty of the story which it tells,—for it tells none; nor by any utilitarian merits, like a work of architecture; nor yet can it even be kept out of the way, like a piece of bad music. There it stands, greeting us morn and eve, night and day,—unflinchingly, imperturbably, —with not a word to say for itself,—but ever shocking us by its blemishes, and paining us by the recollection of its cost;— while of no conceivable use can it possibly be, save to thrust one's hat on in some day of more than usual disgust.

Thus, perfect beauty of form is the paramount and indispensable requisite of Sculpture. But few people recollect how difficult this is of attainment. The forms in which Sculpture

deals are not those half-figures, with outlines melting into thin air, with which Painting has to do,—which cannot be walked round, and which, fixed immovably upon a plane surface, present but one unchanging aspect to the beholder. On the contrary, a statue stands forth bodily, to be seen and handled all round, —with limbs as perfect, and outlines considerably more definite, than your own. Every step you take round it, brings into view a new phase of the figure, and a new and ever-varying harmony of outline. This is the crowning difficulty of Sculpture. It is comparatively easy to imagine a fine single aspect of a figure, such as may be needed in Painting; but to imagine a dozen of these, (as a first-class piece of sculpture requires,) each, too, blending beautifully into the others, is a very different task. Of course, if you muffle up the figure in a cloak, you at once rid yourself of, or at least mightily lessen, the difficulty;—for in this case the front aspect is almost all that the sculptor need think of, and for the rest, he has just to copy the folds of his cloak as it hangs in the wardrobe. But such statues are hardly to be considered within the strict domain of Fine Art. It is Art subordinated—I do not say wrongly—to utilitarian purposes. And it ought ever to be recollected by the critics of civic statues, that the real test of the artist's skill in such cases is not the absolute, but the relative, merit of his work; for the real problem which his genius has to solve is simply this,— Given a certain subject and a fixed sum, how to make the most of them?

Such, then, is the great object and the chief difficulties of the Fine Art of Sculpture. Let us now mark one or two of its minor or less definite characteristics. One of these, as I have said, is, that it admits of but little plurality of figures. This is owing to the amazing difficulty of grouping together figures in the hard marble in such a way as to preserve complete symmetry in the composition, without impairing the perfectness and beauty of the component figures,—things not easily reconciled. Accordingly, when the Sculptors of antiquity repre-

sented the Muses, they never attempted to unite or group them in combined action,—they gave each Muse separately, with her appropriate accessories,—each statue formed an independent whole; and it was left to the Painter to combine the "tuneful Nine" into one picture. The most successful examples which we have of several figures in one piece of statuary are the Laocöon and the Toro Farnese. And most wonderful and beautiful works they are;—for, as may be mentioned here, I hold that it may be set down as a general rule, that the more you extend the grasp of an Art without sacrificing any of its essential excellencies, the higher will be the character of the work produced. In Bas-reliefs the process of grouping several figures in one symmetrical composition—(in Friezes, although a melody, or beauty of succession, should pervade them, there is seldom any attempt at symmetry or harmony)—may be carried very much further than in Sculpture. The process, in fact, is incomparably easier in the former art than in the latter; for in bas-relief, as in painting, the figures present only one front to the eye,—whereas sculpture can be viewed all round, and must look well from every point. Even in bas-relief, however, grouping labours under great disadvantages; for, owing to the absence of colour, we cannot have that variety in the complexion and dress of the component figures which produces such pleasing effects in painting. Hence bas-relief ever tends towards tameness and monotony,—a fault from which Canova's fine group, "The Death of Socrates," is not free. Its very perfection in one important point—namely, the remarkable symmetry which pervades the group,—while justly meriting no common meed of admiration, helps, by the insipidity it produces, to draw attention to the comparatively meagre powers of this hybrid art, which, although producing many very fine things, has neither the full beauty of Sculpture, nor the rich and endless variety of Painting.

The next remark I would make brings us upon delicate ground. I have said that Sculpture, of all the Fine Arts, is the one most characterised by Simplicity,—it having little to work with; and

it must now be added, in some measure as a corollary to this, that sculpture is the Art of all others peculiarly fitted for the representation of Repose: just as Painting, on the other hand, with its infinite powers of telling a story, is peculiarly suited for the representation of Action. The one, comparatively limited to the sphere of Form, deals pre-eminently with physical beauty and symmetry, which are ever found nearest perfection in states of repose;—whereas the manifold resources of the other compel it (for an Art never fully satisfies unless it work up to its full powers) to deal chiefly with mental beauty and the charms of expression, which are best shown when the figures are engaged in picturesque action. There is something in the very mechanical qualities of Sculpture which tends to limit its representation of motion and emotion. Its solid figures and limbs, so different from the coloured figments of painting, being subject like living beings to the laws of gravitation, renders attitudes which might be tolerable in the one art, not so in the other. The hardness and rigidity of the material, too—marble or bronze—renders it not very suitable for the representation of violent (*i. e.* spasmodic and transitory) action or expression; because imparting to such flitting attitudes and aspects a degree of stiffness and permanence much greater than painting would do,—or, as M. Guizot says, it makes them "more eternal." Moreover, there is something in the sight of *suspended* action—an action incomplete, and without its result—which always troubles and breaks the repose of the mind. It has the disquieting, though not the jarring, effect of a discord; and like a discord, the mind (especially in solid sculpture) ever longs to have it resolved, finished. Cautiously used, it will produce a pleasurable excitement in the mind, but when in excess only dissatisfaction. Lastly, and what is a still more important consideration is this,—that as physical beauty, or perfection of form, is the great object of the Sculptor's art, and as all violent action or expression involves a sacrifice of this kind of beauty, there are manifestly certain limits in the representation of Action beyond which he cannot with propriety go.

Emotion, for instance, may be allowed to wreathe the face into becoming smiles, but the distorting action of violent Passion upon the features ought to be avoided. Indeed, so supreme is beauty of Form in this art, that in the group of the Laocöon, the sculptor has been careful not to represent the legs and arms of the children as being in any way crushed or distorted by the coils of the serpents,—although, in fact, no such roundness of the limb could, under such circumstances, be preserved. Thus even Truth itself can hardly be tolerated in sculpture when it involves a sacrifice of Beauty. As for such pieces of sculpture as that which represents Milo caught in the cleft tree, with the wolf tearing at him, they are to me unbearable. It violates both Art and common feeling to see helpless and unbeauteous agony eternised in stone.

The beauty of repose, therefore, I repeat, is most peculiarly the province of Sculpture. But, then, this kind of beauty is the most lifeless of all; and a sculptor of genius will not be content with this. He will seek to extend the compass of his art as far as possible; and, accordingly, he will aim at infusing into his figures as much of life and feeling as is compatible with the paramount claims of physical beauty. Thus only, in my opinion, can Ideal Sculpture be carried to its highest power, or produce that "something of the divine" which *lives* in the masterpieces of Grecian art. How far this union of the opposite qualities of Symmetry and Expression can be carried, will, of course, depend entirely upon the genius of the individual artist. But I would lay down unhesitatingly, as the grand canon of the Sculptor's art,—that he should seek to combine in his figures the greatest amount of Life and Mind, with the least deviation from a posture of Repose.

In holding these opinions, I differ from M. Guizot, who inculcates much too unqualifiedly the preservation of repose in statuary. Chantrey used to express similar, and even stronger, opinions. But I am persuaded that the fault in both cases was due, not to any deficiency of taste in either of

these talented men, but simply to the fact of neither of them having ever properly examined their ideas on this subject, so as to make their language a true exponent of their feelings. If either of them had been asked to pass a judgment upon any single piece of sculpture, his judgment would doubtless have been correct; but ask them to theorise, and then, seemingly from not fully knowing their own minds, their theory would have been wrong. Chantrey once, previous to executing his equestrian statue of Wellington, gave it as his opinion, in this loose-thinking style, to the Duke, that the *intense repose* of the Egyptian statues (of course he did not say their *form*) was the best exponent of the true spirit of Sculpture. If Chantrey was right, then the best half of Grecian sculpture was wrong. For my own part, I believe that there is no expression too animated for a statue, if that expression be a beautiful one. Throw as much life and radiance into a face as the cold marble will take on. Imitate, if you will, the most fleeting and brilliant emotions that ever light up the countenance, or breathe from the sympathising frame. Catch, if you can, that subtle rapture which animates the whole air and motion of a Psyche as she throws herself on the bosom of her lover,—of a child leaping joyously into its mother's arms,—of an angel, with uplifted countenance and outstretched arms, rapturously starting from earth for his skyey home; not lifted heavenward by that to me odious conceit, the vulgar adjunct of wings, but borne upward by the heavenly love within,—rising by the pure power of the untrammelled Soul. Nothing is too lifeful for sculpture, if so be it be beautiful. And although I should no more insist upon Sculpture being ever thus developed in its highest power, than I would have a greyhound ever kept at full speed; still, such a union of Lifefulness with Beauty *is* unquestionably the true climax of the sculptor's art, and never should a sculptor let himself be deterred from attempting it by any theory as to the exclusive supremacy of stillness and repose. To take an instance even where beauty does not exist in its highest form,

—what sculpture-group more full of life, motion, and vivacity of expression than the Centaur in Nero Antico in the Capitol; and yet is it not most admirable, and of a kind of which the mind is the longest of tiring? The face of the Centaur is wreathed all over with merry laughter,—one of his arms is curved upwards in a joyous attitude, in the air,—two of the feet of the equine portion of the monster are lifted as if in motion,—and the tail is frisked up into the air in the liveliest manner possible. Here, then, is a statue brimful of life and motion; and yet I maintain, against M. Guizot or any other theoriser to the contrary, that it is very beautiful.

It is important to remark that in all those antique heads where Repose is most predominant, it is never the repose of apathy or vacancy. There is a peculiar air of thought, or even emotion, about them,—most unlike the mindless busts of modern times. They are in deep and therefore quiet thought, —self-stayed, in an enduring evenness of mind,—heroes, reminding us of Horace's lines,—

> "Si fractus illabatur orbis
> Impavidum ferient ruinæ."

It is in such statuary that we see how conducive Repose is to the aspect of Grandeur. All the grander deities of Grecian mythology—Jupiter, Juno, Minerva—are ever represented with a grave and deeply tranquil aspect. The calm of the blue skies rays from their passionless fronts; and there is an air of silence and meditation about them, befitting Gods revolving in their lofty minds (*altâ mente reposta*) the destinies of a world. As soon, however, as we turn to Bacchus or Mercury—or, still more, to Venus,—we find ourselves gliding gently from the sphere of celestial repose into that of human motion and emotion; and are made to feel at once how a degree of Motion (though it lessen the grandeur of a work, by deviating from the straight lines so characteristic of repose) may, by throwing the body into gentle curves, be made greatly to increase its beauty. Look, for example, at the Venus de Medicis,—the

most perfect embodiment of this kind of beauty. Her whole attitude is expressive of motion. The head looks round,—her body stoops gracefully forward,—one limb bent in motion, and one foot hardly touching the ground,—while her arms are thrown forward as if to cover her unrobed charms from unlawful gaze. She stands as if half-startled, when emerging from the bath, by the sound of approaching footsteps. It is a momentary attitude, yet one which might be maintained for a considerable time,—a brief "halting-place" of motion, which the imagination of the artist has happily seized, and his skill most successfully embodied in marble. It is a curious fact (communicated to me by a learned professor of anatomy, who discovered it during a minute examination of this beautiful relic of Greek art) that the Venus de Medicis is in such a posture that half an inch further stoop of the body would, were the same attitude retained, make it lose its balance. The figure, therefore, though still self-poised, trembles on the very verge of motion,—a circumstance which doubtless enhances the indescribable charm of this statue "which enchants the world."

This brings us to another point; which is,—that one of the Sculptor's greatest difficulties, when attempting such exquisite forms of the Beautiful, is the peculiar nature of the mechanical process by which he embodies his conceptions. The nature of his work is so tedious that it is almost impossible for him to successfully execute subjects requiring fiery or impassioned treatment. The imagination cannot be kept in lively action for so long a time. The Painter, indeed, when he has seized in imagination the expression or the character of countenance required for the embodiment of some violent action, or of the complicated passions and actions of the various persons of his story, is able, in a few strokes, to transfer it to his canvass, and thus to profit by a happy, though transitory, inspiration. But with the Sculptor it is quite otherwise. His subjects must be such as he can calmly and quietly develop; and which re-

quire rather depth of feeling than brilliancy or fire,—subjects, the consideration of which will awaken in him that sustained enthusiasm which treasures and broods over an expression before reproducing it, rather than that lively excitement which must put its ideas into form as rapidly as they arise. A Gaspar Poussin can strike off at a heat his Rape of the Sabines, with all its wonderful postures and looks, and burning glances, and arms tossed up to heaven,—the ravished and the ravishers starting out from the canvass, twisting and gasping and struggling as if in life;—a vision dashed into paint while the original forms and hues still lingered on his mental eye. But the first freshness of so impassioned a conception is quickly gone, and not the liveliest imagination in the world would suffice to enable a Sculptor to cope with it. Not even Michael Angelo himself, with all his burning genius, was able to throw so much fire into his statues as into his frescoes,—and that, too, although he worked so furiously when the vision was on him, as to be almost hidden from view in the spray of the marble!

Hence it often happens that a sculptor may throw a figure into a posture which everybody knows to be one of violent action or emotion, and yet the pervading look or feeling of the statue may not be correspondingly animated. He can copy the lifeful *attitude*, the merely physical part of his theme; but the lifeful *look*, the subtle pervading spirit, which rays from the limbs as well as from the face, escapes him. Imagination can rarely hold so etherial a thing so long. But it is just this subtle look—this indescribable *feeling*, we might almost call it—of life and thought and motion, that is so priceless in statuary; for it is this alone which can give to sculpture that which we have laid down as its culminating beauty,—namely, great Lifefulness and Expression, with little deviation from Repose. Look at that statue, of all others the most divine and beautiful—the Pythian Apollo,—and you will find this

very quality most strikingly exemplified in it; grafted, moreover, upon that perfection of form which I have stated to be the fundamental, as this is the crowning, charm of the sculptor's art. There stands that matchless statue, — beautiful, divine, redolent of life and feeling;—and yet, how little action! In Sculpture-Galleries you may see exquisite friezes, full of figures of men and Centaurs in all the most spirited postures of actual combat; or statues, Gladiators and Combatants and Athletes in all modes of action; yet not one of these figures, I make bold to say—not even Laocöon himself—can vie in point of lifefulness and expression with the Apollo. And from the multitude of fine forms around, the eye at once singles out, as the embodiment of Life as well as of Beauty, that stately figure, standing, breathing but motionless, watching the flight of his arrow.

In regard to the work of conception in the mind of the artist, M. Guizot holds a theory which appears to be the accepted one, but which I entirely dispute. His first sentence is admirable and true. He says:—"The Sculptor takes a mass of clay; his model is present to his eyes, as, according to Plato, that of the archetypal man was in the creative mind of God: he walks in spirit round it, examines it on all sides, and takes its dimensions thoroughly." But then, after a statement—correct enough in some cases—in which he ascribes to the sculptor a knowledge of anatomy that would do credit to a surgeon, he proceeds in the following extraordinary style:—"His first act is to set up in imagination this scaffolding of bones; he then covers it with muscles, to which he gives the attitude and degree of motion necessary for his statue, and finally envelopes all with the flesh which is to give the proportions and the living form of man." And to this he appends the following magniloquent interjection:—"It is thus that the gems of antiquity show us Prometheus over his awful work!" All nonsense. It is not a skeleton—a Death, with grinning jaws and big raw joints, that starts up before the eye of the inspired artist. Imagination does not love to deal with such

fragmentary things, but, as Plato long ago announced, with *wholes*—things perfect. And the vision which brightens upon the mental eye of the sculptor when rapt in the inspired work of conception, is not a skeleton Apollo, or a Venus de Medicis in bones; but those charming figures complete,—nay, more perfect than ever chisel can copy,—nay, not even arrayed in the cold pure marble, but, primarily, in the radiant beauty and brilliance of ideal *life* itself. An artist's knowledge of anatomy serves merely as a corrective to his conceptions—nothing more. Poor Haydon, when young, and when entering on that career of painting which he was destined to pursue amidst such troubles and end in such misery, used to walk up and down with his Sister, their arms around each other's neck,—she questioning him about bones and muscles and joints, and he repeating the proper answers thereto. But for all this training —and, I may add, despite an enthusiastic perseverance that might have made him excel in almost any profession—he never attained in perfection to that fine sense of Form, which in Painting is necessary, but which in Sculpture is indispensable.

ETHNOLOGY OF EUROPE

"THERE were brave men before Agamemnon"—heroes before there was a Homer to sing them, says that prince of sensible poets, Horace. It is not less true that there were nations before history—communities, races, of which the eye of civilisation never caught a glimpse. In some cases, before the light of history broke in upon their seclusion, those old types of mankind, losing their individuality, had become merged in a succeeding and mightier wave of population. In other cases they had wholly disappeared: they had lived and fought and died in perfect isolation from every focus of civilisation, and left not even a floating legend behind them in the world. Man's mortality—the destiny of the Individual to pass away from earth like a vapour, making room for others, heirs of his wisdom and unimbued with his prejudices—is the most familiar of truths; but the mortality of Nations, the death of races, is a conception which at first staggers us. That a family should grow into a nation,—that from the loins of one man should descend a seed like unto the sands on the sea-shore for multitude, appears to our everyday senses as a natural consequence; but that nations should dwindle down to families, and families into solitary individuals, until death gets all, and earth has swallowed up a whole phase of humanity, is a thought the grandeur of which is felt to be solemn, if not appalling. The conception, however, need not be a strange one. Facts, which reconcile us to everything, are

testifying to its truth even at the present day. It is not long since the Guanches in the Canary Islands, that last specimen of what may once have been a race, and the Guarras in Brazil, dwindled out of existence in their last asylum,—expiring at the feet of the more lordly race which the fulness of time brought to their dwellings.

Not to mention the Miaou-tse in China, and other relics of Asiatic races, the same phenomenon is most impressively presented to us among the Red Men of America, where the old race is seen dying out beneath our very eyes. Year by year they are melting away. Of the millions which once peopled the vast regions on this side of the Mississippi river, all have vanished but a few scattered families; and it is as clear as the sun at noonday, that in a few generations more, the last of the Red Men will be numbered with the dead. Why, is it asked, are they thus doomed? A few years ago, in the suburbs of Mobile, or wandering through its streets, you might have seen the remnant of the Choctaw tribe, covered with nothing but blankets, and living in bark tents, scarcely a degree advanced above the beasts of the field. They have now gone farther west, towards the setting sun, which symbolises their destiny. No philanthropy can civilise them,—no ingenuity can induce them to do an honest day's work. The life of the woods is struck from them,—the white man has taken their hunting-grounds; and they live on helpless as in a dream, quietly abiding their time. They are stationary, they will not advance; and, like everything stationary, the world is sweeping them away. They sufficed for the first phase of humanity in the New World. So long as there was only need for man to be lord of the woods and of the animal creation, the Red Man did well; but no sooner did the call come for him to perfect himself, and change the primeval forest into gardens, than the Red Man knew, by mysterious instinct, that his mission was over,—and either allowed himself, in sheer apathy, to sink out of existence among the pitiless feet of the new-comers, or died fighting

fiercely with the apostles of a civilisation which he hated but could not comprehend.

Far back in the history of Europe and of our own country—or rather, we should say, in periods entirely pre-historic—it is now known that a similar disappearance of a human race has taken place. Celt and Teuton, we fancy, were the first occupiers of Europe,—but the case is not so. A wave or waves of population had preceded even them; and as we dig down into the soil beneath us, ever and anon we come upon strange and startling traces of those primeval occupants of the land. In those natural museums of the past, the caves and peat-bogs of Europe, the keen-witted archæologists of present times are finding abundant relics of a race dissimilar from all the human varieties of which written history takes cognisance. The researches of Wilson among the peat-bogs of the British Isles have brought to light traces of no less than two distinct pre-Celtic races inhabiting the land,—one of which had the skull of a singularly broad and short, square and compact form, while the head of the other race was long and very narrow, or "boat-shaped." The exhumations of Retzius show that similar races once inhabited Scandinavia. The caves and ossuaries of Franconia and Upper Saxony prove that in Central Europe, also, there were races before the advent of the Celts; and the researches of Boucher de Perthes, amid the alluvial stratifications of the river Somme, indicate a not less ancient epoch for the cinerary urns, bones, and instruments of a primordial people in France.

"Here," says M. de Perthes, "we naturally inquire, who were these mysterious primitive inhabitants of Gaul? We are told that this part of Europe is of modern origin, or at least of recent population. Its annals scarcely reach to twenty centuries, and even its traditions do not exceed two thousand five hundred years. The various people who are known to history as having occupied it—the Galls, the Celts, the Veneti, Ligurians, Iberians, Cymbrians, and Scythians—have left no vestiges

to which we can assign that date. The traces of those [originally] nomadic tribes who ravaged Gaul scarcely precede the Christian era by a few centuries. Was Gaul, then, a desert, a solitude, before this period? Was its sun less genial, or its soil less fertile? Were not its hills as pleasant, and its plains and valleys as ready for the harvest? Or, if men had not yet learned to plough and sow, were not its rivers filled with fish, and its forests with game? And, if the land abounded with everything calculated to attract and support a population, why should it not have been inhabited? The absence of great ruins, indeed, indicates that Gaul at this period, and even much later, had not attained a great degree of civilisation, nor been the seat of powerful kingdoms; but why should it not have had its towns and villages?—or rather, why should it not, like the steppes of Russia, the prairies and virgin forests of America, and the fertile plains of Africa, have been overrun from time immemorial by tribes of men—savages, perhaps, but nevertheless united in families if not in nations?"

We shall not dwell at present upon the relics of those races who have thus preceded all history, and vanished into their graves before a civilised age could behold them. We shall not accompany M. de Perthes in his various excavations, nor, after passing through the first stratum of soil, and coming to the relics of the Middle Ages, see him meet subsequently, in regular order, with traces of the Roman and Celtic periods, until at last he comes upon weapons, utensils, figures, signs, and symbols, which must have been the work of a surpassingly ancient people. We need not describe his discovery of successive beds of bones and ashes, separated from each other by strata of turf and tufa, with no less than five different stages of cinerary urns, belonging to distinct generations, of which the oldest were deposited below the woody or diluvian turf,—nor the coarse structure of these vases (made by hand and dried in the sun), nor the rude utensils of bone, or roughly-carved stone, by which they were surrounded. Neither need we do more than allude to the re-

mains of a fossil whale recently exhumed in Blair Drummond moss (twenty miles from the nearest point of the river Forth where, by any possibility, a whale could nowadays be stranded), having beside it a rude harpoon of deer's horn—speaking plainly of the co-existence, in those remote pre-Celtic times, of human inhabitants. Even above ground there are striking relics scattered over Europe which it would be hazardous to assign to any race known to history. Those circles of upright stones, of which Stonehenge is the most familiar example, date back to an unknown antiquity. They are found throughout Europe, from Norway to the Mediterranean; and manifestly they must have been erected by a numerous people, and been faithful exponents of a general sentiment, since we find them in so many countries. They are commonly called Celtic or Druidic; not because they were raised originally by Druids, but because they had been used in the Druidical worship, though erected, it may be, for other uses, or dedicated to other divinities,—even as the temples of Paganism afterwards served for the solemnities of Christianity. All that we know is, that, having neither date nor inscription, they must be older than written language,—for a people who can write never leave their own names or exploits unchronicled. The ancients were as ignorant on this matter as ourselves; even tradition is silent; and, at the period of the Roman invasion, the origin of those monuments was already shrouded in obscurity. A revolution, therefore, must have intervened between the time of their erection and the advent of the Legions; and what revolution could it be in those days save a revolution of race? "The Celtæ," says Dr Wilson, "are by no means to be regarded as the primal heirs of the land, but are, on the contrary, comparatively recent intruders. Ages before their migration into Europe, an unknown Allophylian race had wandered to this remote island of the sea, and in its turn gave place to later Allophylian nomades, also destined to occupy it only for a time. Of these ante-historical nations, archæology alone reveals any traces."

Passing from this strange and solemn spectacle of the death and utter extinction of human races, once living and enjoying themselves amidst those very scenes where we ourselves now pant and revel in the drama of existence,—let us look upon the face of Europe as it appears when first the light of history broke upon it. Since then, there have been remarkable declines, many minglings, but no extinction of races. As if war and rivalry were a permanent attribute of the species, when the curtain first rises upon Europe, it is a struggle of races that is discernible through the gloom. A dark-skinned race, long settled in the land, are fighting doggedly with a fair-skinned race of invaders from the East. The dark-skins were worsted, but still survive—definitely in detached groups, and indefinitely as a leaven to entire populations. That dark-skinned race have been called Iberians,—the fair-skinned new-comers were the Indo-Europeans, headed by the Gaels or Celts. When the two races first met in Europe—the *blond* from the south-east, meeting the *dark* in the west—they encountered each other as natural enemies, and a severe struggle ensued. The Celts finally forced their way into Spain, and established themselves there,—became more or less amalgamated with the darker occupants, and were called *Celt-Iberians*. Ever since, these two opposite types have been commingling throughout Western Europe; but a complete fusion has not even yet taken place, and the types of each are still traceable in certain localities.

There was thus an Iberian world before there was a Celtic world. One of the pre-Celtic populations of the British Isles was probably Iberian; and their type, besides leavening indefinitely a portion of the present population, is still distinctly traceable in many of the dark-haired, dark-eyed, and dark-skinned Irish, as well as occasionally in Great Britain itself. The Basques, protected by their Pyrenean fastnesses, are a still existent group of nearly pure Iberians; and of their tongue, termed Euskaldune by its speakers, Duponceau long ago said:

—"This language, preserved in a corner of Europe, by a few thousand mountaineers, is the sole remaining fragment of perhaps a hundred dialects, constructed on the same plan, which probably existed and were universally spoken, at a remote period, in that quarter of the world. Like the bones of the mammoth, and the relics of unknown races which have perished, it remains a monument of the destruction brought by a succession of ages. It stands single and alone of its kind, surrounded by idioms whose modern construction bears no analogy to it."

The Bretons form another isolated but less distinct group of still existent Iberians. To this day they present a striking contrast to the population around them, who are of tall stature, with blue eyes, white skins, and blond hair—communicative, impetuous, versatile—passing rapidly from courage to timidity, and from audacity to despair: in other words, they present the distinctive character of the Celtic race, now, as in the ancient Gauls. The Bretons are entirely different. They are taciturn —hold strongly to their ideas and usages—are persevering and of melancholic temperament: in a word, both in *morale* and *physique*, they present the type of a southern race. And this brings us to the question, Whence came these Iberians? M. Bodichon, a surgeon distinguished for fifteen years in the French army of Algeria, observes that persons who have lived in Brittany, and then go to Algeria, are struck with the resemblance which they discover between the ancient Armoricans (the Bretons) and the Cabyles of Northern Africa. "In fact, the moral and physical character of the two races is identical. The Breton of pure blood has a bony head, light-yellow complexion of bistre tinge, eyes black or brown, stature short, and the black hair of the Cabyle. Like him, he instinctively hates strangers. In both, the same perverseness and obstinacy, the same endurance of fatigue, same love of independence, same inflexion of voice, same expression of feelings. Listen to a Cabyle speaking his

native tongue, and you will think you hear a Breton talking Celtic." Impressed with this resemblance, M. Bodichon was induced to reflect on the subject, and at last came to the conclusion that the Berbers who primarily peopled Northern Africa, and the dark-skinned Iberians of Western Europe, belonged to the same race. He thinks that, as Europe and Africa were once united at their western extremities, previous to the convulsion which produced the Straits of Gibraltar, this Iberian population passed into Spain by this primeval isthmus, and thence diffused themselves over Western Europe and its isles. Whether this were actually the case, it is hard to say; but it is important to note that Sallust, quoting "the Punic books which were ascribed to King Hiempsal," exactly reverses the course of migration, and states that the progenitors of the African Moors were a people from Media and Persia who had marched through Europe into Spain, and thence into Mauritania—though whether overland by the isthmus, or by boats across the strait, is still left to conjecture. Prichard thinks the Libyans and Iberians were distinct races, but owns that they were found intermingling in the islands and along the western shores of the Mediterranean. Of course it may be taken for granted that among these Iberians, thus spread over Africa, Spain, France, and the British Isles, local differences would exist—just as there is a perceptible difference between the Anglo-Saxons of the Old World and those of the New; but there is reason to believe that the *Scoti* of Ireland, the Iberians of Spain, and the Berbers of Africa, belonged to a fundamentally identical race.

How any race first came into a country, is a matter of little moment, especially when the epoch of their arrival so far transcends the dawn of history as does that of the Iberians. Even the first wave of the Celtic migration had reached the West before any scrutiny of their progress was possible; for when tradition first dimly opens upon Gaul, about 1500 B.C., its territory was occupied by these two primitive and distinctly-

marked Caucasian races—the Celts and Iberians: the one fair-skinned and light-haired, the other a dark race; and each speaking a language bearing no affinity to that of the other—precisely as the Euskaldune of the present Basques is unintelligible to Gaelic tribes of Lower Brittany. Some of the subsequent waves of Celtic or Scythic migration come within the ken of history; and it is remarkable that the line of march which these followed, after passing the shores of the Black Sea, seems to have been along the "Riphæan Valley," which lay to the north of the Carpathian Mountains, and stretched to the Baltic. Now, if we look at the contour map of Europe in *Johnston's Physical Atlas*, we see a narrow strip of the lowest elevation extending from the Black Sea to the Baltic; and turning to the geological map, we find that this same tract is overlaid with recent diluvial deposits. We know that the Scandinavian region is rising—it is probable that all the plain of Sarmatia has partaken of the elevation; and before the barriers of the Thracian Bosphorus burst, it seems to me certain that the waters of the Caspian, the Euxine, and the Baltic were united by that "ocean-river" of which Homer, Hesiod, and all the old bards sing, and by sailing along which, both the Argonauts and Ulysses are reported to have passed northwards into the western ocean. The existence of this vast belt of water, stretching from the southmost point of the Baltic to the Caucasus, is possibly one reason why the Slavonians were late of appearing in Southern Europe, and why no sprinkling of them or of the Mongols is to be found among the early settlers of South-western Europe. All the early migrations into Europe proceeded from Caucasian or sub-Caucasian regions — a circumstance which, considering the known simultaneous existence of roving hordes and a great population on the Mongolian plains, can hardly be accounted for on the supposition that the face of Eastern Europe has since then undergone no change. But on the supposition we make, the chain of the Ural Mountains and this large mediterranean basin would for long act as restraints

upon any tendency of the Mongolian population to move westward, or of the Slavonians to move southwards.*

The next wave of population which flowed westwards was the Cimbri or Cimmerians,—a people cognate to the Celts or Gaels, yet by no means closely related. About the seventh century B.C., as may be inferred from Herodotus, a clan of this race abandoned the Tauric Chersonese, and marched westwards,—this Cimbrian migration, however, like most others, not being conducted in one mass, but by successive and sometimes widely-severed movements. Three centuries afterwards we find the Cimbri on the shores of the Northern Ocean in Jutland; and between the years 113 and 101 B.C., we find the race all on the move, and setting out on that southward career of devastation which eventually brought them into Gaul, Spain, and Italy. The Belgians seem to have been a Cimbrian tribe which had preceded the main body; for when, in this invasion, the Cimbri reached Northern Gaul, the Belgæ immediately joined them as allies against the Celts,—and it seems also proved that the Cimbri and Belgæ spoke dialects of the same language. The Celts, routed by the invaders, were impelled to the south and east, doubtless tresspassing in turn upon the dark-skinned Iberians. It was immediately after this inroad that Cæsar and his Romans entered Gaul, and commenced his Commentaries with the well-known statement:—"All Gaul is divided into three parts, of which one is inhabited by the Belgians [or Cimbri, in the north],—another by the Aquitanians [or Iberians, in the south-west],—and the third [or eastern], by those who in their own language, call themselves Celts, and who in our tongue are called Gael (*Galli*). These races differ among themselves by their language, their manners, and their laws." Previous to this time the Teutons had settled in

* Some very curious speculations and researches on this subject will be found in a pamphlet entitled *A Vindication of the Bardic Accounts of the Early Invasions of Ireland; with a Verification of the River-Ocean of the Greeks.* Dublin: 1851.

Central Europe, and in alliance with Celtic tribes made incursions into Italy.

We have now reached a period at which the population of Europe becomes greatly mixed, in consequence of the constant rovings and incursions of the various races and tribes of which it was composed. It is interesting to note the effect of such a state of things upon the physical characteristics of the people. And first it is to be observed, that, with extremely rare exceptions, conquest is not attended by extermination. When one people, even in semi-barbarous times, conquers another, it does not annihilate and rarely displaces, but for the most part only overlays it. The annihilating process, of which a sample may be seen in America, only takes place in the rare case of the meeting of two nations in such widely different states of civilisation as to render amalgamation impossible,—and even in this case only when the inferior race is so intractable as to resist all obedience to the superior. *Displacement,* however, which is obselete now, since advancing civilisation has rendered conquest political only—was pretty common two thousand years ago, when Europe was thinly and nomadically peopled, and tribes migrated in mass. In this way, for example, the Cimbri wedged themselves in among the Celts in Northern Gaul, and took possession of a large tract in Northern Italy. But soon after the Christian era—chiefly in consequence of the increasing density and settled habits of the population—conquest ceased to produce either extermination or displacement, and consisted merely in the overlaying of one population by another much less numerous but more powerful. Thus the Normans in England and the Franks in Gaul were but a handful compared to the conquered population; and consequently, though they might give their laws or even their name to the country, they could not materially alter the physical character of the people.

The chief influence which, in the case of two races mingling, determines the preservation or extinction of types or national

features, is simply the numerical proportion existing between the two races thus amalgamating. When races meet and mix on equal terms, and with no natural repugnance to each other, the relative number of the two races decides the question,—the type of the smaller number, in this hypothetical case, inevitably disappearing in the long run. Take, for example, a thousand white families and fifty black ones—place them on an island, and let them regularly intermarry; and the result would be, that in the course of time the black type would disappear, although there is reason to believe that traces of it would "crop out" during a very long period. And if two fair-skinned races were brought into contact in a similar manner, and in similar proportions, the extermination of the less numerous one would be even sooner effected. The operation of this law is well illustrated in the lower animals. Cross two domestic animals of different breeds—take the offspring and cross it with one of the parent stocks, and continue this process for a few generations, and the result is that the one becomes swallowed up in the other. This is the theory; but in the actual world races never intermarry with such theoretical regularity and indifference. Each community of mankind has, as its conservative element, a tendency to form unions within its own limits; and if a foreign element is once introduced into a population, the operation of this predilection tends to preserve the type of the lesser number for a much longer period than mere theory would assign to it. The stranger-hating and obstinate-tempered Bretons and Basques, for example, by intermarrying among themselves, have thus preserved the type of the old Iberians through three thousand years, although surrounded on all sides by the fair-haired Celts. In the case of a conquering race like the Franks and Normans, there is generally less isolation than this; but then, the way in which the amalgamation between the conquerors and the conquered takes place, is such as to give a great advantage to the former. The sons of the conquerors may wed the daughters of

the conquered, for the sake of their lands; but it is comparatively seldom that the daughters of the invaders will condescend to tarnish their scutcheon by becoming wedded to and merged in the class of the vanquished. The principle of caste is all-pervading, even when nominally repudiated; and thus, as the male ever influences most directly the type of the offspring, a small number of conquerors may for long perpetuate their line in comparative purity, even though surrounded by myriads of a different race.

From all this it results, that when a small body of foreigners is shot into the middle of a large population, as it were in virtue of a mere casual impetus, and not owing to higher qualities and organisation on the part of the aliens, the newcomers are quickly absorbed into the general mass of the population, and their type, in course of time, wholly disappears. The history of Italy throws important light upon this subject. Successive hordes of barbarians broke into and overran that country, powerful from their rude energy, but numerically weak, and inferior in mental condition to the conquered race. Again and again did human waves of Visigoths, Vandals, Huns, Herules, Ostrogoths, Lombards, and Normans roll in succession over the Italian plains; and even the Saracens for a time held possession of some of its fairest provinces; yet what vestiges remain in Italy of those barbarian surges? The first three passed over it like tornados; the two next, after contending with the Goths, were expelled from the land; and of the whole conglomerate mass but small fragments were left, too insignificant to materially influence the native Italic types. The Lombards, indeed, remained, and implanted their name on a portion of the peninsula; but, with this fragmentary exception, the aboriginal population of Italy has remained, ever after the early times when the Celts and Cimbri made settlements in its northern provinces, unaltered in blood and features. And thus the normal law is fulfilled, in the invaders being swallowed up in the mass of the native population,—leavening

it, of course, more or less, but ever tending towards ultimate extinction.

When a really conquering race, however—one superior alike in physical and mental power to the subjugated population—invades a country, and, instead of being expelled, or passing onwards like a transient whirlwind, continues to hold the realm in virtue of superior power, such a race, as we have said, may long and almost indelibly perpetuate their features in the land. In such a case they in reality, if not in name, form a caste; each one of the invaders becomes a noble; and when they make exceptions to the practice of intermarrying among themselves, it is only that they may more widely diffuse their lineaments, by forming matrimonial or other unions with the female portion of the native race.* Thus the feudalism of the all-conquering Normans was a system of caste, by means of which they long maintained the purity and pre-eminence of their race in the countries which they conquered; as may best be seen in French history, where the *vieux noblesse,* even in 1789, were the lineal descendants of the soldiers of Clovis; and where the distinction between *noble* and *roturier* was kept up with such rigid and antiquated pertinacity, that at length the Celtic population, becoming more and more developed alike in intellect and resources, threw off the whole foreign system like an incubus, and returned to those principles of equality and volatility in government which distinguished their ancestors of old Gaul.

We may remark in conclusion, on this topic, that the ascendancy of certain families of mankind is due not only to their superior physical, but even more to their superior mental organisation, which ever keeps them uppermost, and enables them to mate themselves with whom they please. It is a remarkable fact, as illustrative of the native vigour of some

* It is not improbable that the old feudal law, which placed the person of a female vassal at the disposal of the seigneur on her wedding-night, originated in political motives as well as in tyrannous lust.

races, that there is said to be not a head in Christendom which *legitimately* wears a crown—not a single family in Europe whose blood is acknowledged to be royal—but traces its genealogy to that Norman colossus, WILLIAM the CONQUEROR. This has been elaborately shown by M. Paulmier;* but I may add, as a curiosity which lately attracted my own notice, when looking at a portrait of the Conqueror—namely, that a strong resemblance exists between his fine and massive features and those of the Czar Nicholas of Russia. Both are distinguished by the same broad brow and arched eyebrows (not each forming a semicircle, as seems to be the meaning of the term "arched" when applied to eyebrows nowadays, but both combining to form an oval curve, vaulting over the under part of the face, as was the meaning among the Greeks), the same thick straight nose, and the same massive and beautiful conformation in the bones of the jaw and chin. The face of the Emperor Nicholas, however, is not equal in solid strength and intellect to that of his great progenitor.

The operation of these physiological laws upon the population of Europe has been interestingly illustrated by the recent researches of a French naturalist of high reputation, M. Edwards. This gentleman, after perusing Thierry's *History of the Gauls*, made a tour through France, Belgium, Switzerland, and Italy, engaged in careful study of the present population in relation to the ancient settlers; and he asserts that now, after the lapse of two thousand years, the types of the Cimbri, the Celts, and Iberians are still distinctly traceable among their living descendants, in the very localities where history first descries those early families. Of the inland eastern parts of France, tenanted of old by the Gauls proper, and which were never penetrated into by the Cimbri, who took quiet possession of their outskirts, M. Edwards thus speaks:—"In traversing, from north to south, the part of France which

* *Aperçus Genealogiques sur les Descendants de Guillaume. Rev. Archéol.* 1845, p. 794.

corresponds to Oriental Gaul—viz., Burgundy, Lyons, Dauphiny, and Savoy—I have distinguished that type, so well marked, which ethnographers have assigned to the Gauls." That is to say, "the head is so round as to approach the spherical form; the forehead is moderate, slightly protuberant, and receding towards the temples; eyes large and open; the nose, from its depression at its commencement to its termination, almost straight—that is to say, without any marked curve; its extremity is rounded, as well as the chin; the stature medium;—the features thus being quite in harmony with the form of the head." Of the northern part of Ancient Gaul, the principal seat of the Belgæ or Cimbri, he says:—"I traversed a great part of the *Gallia Belgica* of Cæsar, from the mouth of the Somme to that of the Seine; and here I distinguished for the first time the assemblage of features which constitutes the other type, and often to such an exaggerated degree that I was very forcibly struck,—the long head, the broad high forehead, the curved nose, with the point below, and the wings tucked up; the chin boldly developed; and the stature tall." In the other parts of France (exclusive of the south and west, anciently occupied by the Iberians), M. Edwards found that the Cimbrian type had been overcome by the round heads and straight noses of the Gauls, who were the more ancient and more numerous race in those parts, and had covered the whole country before the arrival of the Cymbrians.

Passing into Italy, he continues his examinations. "Whatever may have been the anterior state of matters," he says, "it is certain, from Thierry's researches and the unanimous accord of all historians, that the *Peuples Gaulois* have predominated in the north of Italy, between the Alps and the Apennines. We find them established there at the first dawn of history; and the most authentic testimony represents them with all the character of a great nation, from this remote period down to a very advanced point of Roman history. This is all I need to trouble

myself about. I know the features of their compatriots in Transalpine Gaul—I find them again in Cisalpine Gaul." The old "Gallic" settlers in Northern Italy appear to have been Cimbrian. After describing the well-known head of Dante—which is long and narrow, with a high and developed forehead, nose long and curved, with sharp point and elevated wings—M. Edwards says that he was struck by the great frequency of this type in Tuscany (although a mixed Roman type is there the prevailing one) among the peasantry; in the statues and busts of the Medici family; and also amongst the effigies and bas-reliefs of the illustrious men of the republic of Florence. This type is well marked since the time of Dante, as doubtless long before. It extends to Venice; and in the ducal palace, M. Edwards observed that it is common among the Doges. The type became more predominant as he approached Milan, and thence he traced it as to its fountain into Transalpine Gaul. The physical characteristics of the present population, therefore, correspond with the statements of history, and show that the ancient type of this widespread people, the Cimbri, has survived the lapse and vicissitudes of two thousand years.

In passing through Florence, M. Edwards took occasion to visit the Ducal Gallery, to study the ancient Roman type,—selecting, by preference, the busts of the early Roman emperors, because they were descendants of ancient families. Augustus, Tiberius, Germanicus, Claudius, Nero, Titus, &c., exemplify this type in the Florentine collections; and the family resemblance is so close, and the style of features so remarkable, that they cannot be mistaken. The following is his description:—"The vertical diameter of the head is short, and, consequently, the face broad. As the summit of the cranium is flattened, and the lower margin of the jaw-bone almost horizontal, the contour of the head, when viewed in front, approaches a square. The lateral parts, above the ears, are protuberant; the forehead low; the nose truly aquiline—that is to say, the curve commences near the top and ends before it reaches the point, so that the base is hori-

zontal; the chin is round; and the stature short." This is the characteristic type of a Roman; but we cannot expect now to meet with absolute uniformity in any race, however seemingly pure. Such a type M. Edwards subsequently found to predominate in Rome, and certain parts of Italy, at the present day. It is the original type of the central portions of the peninsula, and, however overlaid at times, has swallowed up all intruders. As a singular corroboration of the French ethnographer's observations, Mr J. C. Nott, an American surgeon and naturalist, says:—"A sailor came to my office, a few months ago, to have a dislocated arm set. When stripped and standing before me, he presented the type described by M. Edwards so perfectly, and moreover combined with such extraordinary development of bone and muscle, that there occurred to my mind at once the beau-ideal of a Roman soldier. Though the man had been an American sailor for twenty years, and spoke English without foreign accent, I could not help asking where he was born? He replied, in a deep strong voice, '*In Rome, sir!*'"*

In Greece the Hellenes and Pelasgi are two races identified with the earliest traditions of the country; but when we appeal to history for their origin, or seek for the part that each has played in the majestic drama of antiquity, there is little more than conjecture to guide us. Greece did not come fairly within the scope of M. Edwards's researches, yet he has ventured a few noteworthy observations in connection with this point. He thinks the same principles that governed his examination of Gaul may be applied to Greece; and that the Hellenes and Pelasgi might be followed ethnologically like the Celts and Cimbri. Perhaps the most important remark which he makes is that which refers to the differences between what he calls the *heroic* and *historic*—or what is generally termed the ideal and real types of the Greek countenance. The ancient monuments

* *Types of Mankind.* By J. C. Nott and G. R. Gliddon. London: 1854. A work of great research and ability, although very erroneous in some of its dogmas.

of art in Greece exhibit a wide diversity of types, and this at every period of their history. Of the two great classes into which these may be divided, M. Edwards says:—"Most of the divinities and personages of the *heroic* times are formed on that well-known model which constitutes what we term the beau-ideal. The forms and proportions of the head and countenance are so regular that we may describe them with mathematical precision. A perfectly oval contour, forehead and nose straight, without depression between them, would suffice to distinguish this type. The harmony is such that the presence of these traits implies the others. But such is not the character of the personages of truly *historic* times. The philosophers, orators, warriors, and poets almost all differ from it, and form a group apart. It cannot be confounded with the rest: we need only point it out, for one to recognise at once how far it is separated. It greatly resembles, on the contrary, the type which is seen in other countries of Europe, while the former is scarcely met with there."

This observation is just. The head of Alexander the Great, and still more that of his reputed half-brother, Ptolemy of Egypt, are nearly allied to the pure classical or heroic type; but these are exceptional cases—and the lineaments of Lycurgus, Eratosthenes, and most other specimens of old Greek portrait-sculpture, are, with the exception of the beard (if indeed such an exception is now requisite), very much like those which one meets with daily in our streets. "Were we to judge solely by the monuments of Greece," continues M. Edwards, "on account of this contrast, we should be tempted to regard the type of the fabulous or heroic personages as ideal. But imagination more readily creates monsters than models of beauty; and this principle alone will suffice to convince us that such a type has existed in Greece, and in the countries where its population has spread, if it does not still exist there."

In corroboration of this conjecture, it may be stated that the learned travellers MM. de Stackelberg and de Bronsted, who

have journeyed through the Morea and closely examined the population, assert that the *heroic* type is still extant in certain localities. M. Poqueville likewise assures us that the models which inspired Phidias and Apelles are still to be found among the inhabitants of the Morea. "They are generally tall, and finely formed; their eyes are full of fire, and they have a beautiful mouth, ornamented with the finest teeth. There are, however, degrees in their beauty, though all may be generally termed handsome. The Spartan woman is fair, of a slender make, but with a noble air. The women of Taÿgetus have the carriage of a Pallas when she wielded her formidable ægis in the midst of a battle. The Messenian woman is low of stature, and distinguished for her *embonpoint*" (this may be owing to a mixture with the primitive race of the Morea, who, as Helots, long existed as a distinct caste in Messenia); "she has regular features, large blue eyes, and long black hair. The Arcadian, in her coarse woollen garments, scarcely suffers the symmetry of her form to appear; but her countenance is expressive of innocence and purity of mind." In the time of Poqueville the Greek women were extremely ignorant and uneducated; but, he says, "music and dancing seem to have been taught them by nature." He speaks of the long flaxen hair of the women of Sparta, their majestic air and carriage, their elegant forms, the symmetry of their features, lighted up by large blue eyes, fringed and shaded with long eyelashes. "The men," he says, "among whom some are 'blonds,' or fair, have noble countenances; are of tall stature, with masculine and regular features." They have preserved something of the Dorians of ancient Sparta.

It would be erroneous, however, to conclude from this that Greek art owed everything to the actual. The type existed more or less imperfectly in the population, but Phidias and the Greek artists took and developed it, by the aid of the imagination, into that perfect phase of physical beauty which we justly term the *beau-ideal*. A nation's beau-ideal is always the perfectionment of its own type. It is easy to see how this

happens. In nations, as in individuals, the soul moulds the body, so far as extrinsic circumstances permit, into a form in accordance with its own ideas and desire; and accordingly, whenever a marked difference exists in the physical aspect of two nations, there, also, we may expect to find a variance in their beau-ideals. Not, as is generally supposed, from the eye of each race becoming accustomed to the national features, but because those features are themselves an incarnation and embodiment of the national mind. It is the soul, or life-spirit, which shapes the national features,—not the national features that mould the æsthetic judgment of the soul. It is not *association*, therefore, that is the cause of the different beau-ideals we behold in the world, but a psychical difference in the nations which produce them, — a circumstance no more remarkable than those moral and intellectual diversities in virtue of which we see one race excelling in the exact sciences, another in the fine arts, a third in military renown, and a fourth in pacific industry. We may adduce, in curious illustration of this point, the well-known fact that Raphael and many other eminent artists have repeatedly given their own likeness to the imaginary offspring of their art,—not real, but idealised likenesses. How was this? From vanity? No, certainly; but because the ideal most congenial to them, which they could most easily hold in their mind, and which it gave them most pleasure to linger over and beautify, was the ideal constituted by the perfectionment of their own features. There is something more than mere vanity in the pleasure usually derived from looking into a mirror; for, when the features are in exact or nearly exact accordance with the desires of the framing Spirit within, there must always be a pleasure in the soul looking upon its own likeness: even as it experiences a similar delight when meeting with a being of perfectly congenial nature—in other words, its spiritual (as the other is its physical) likeness. It is to be expected, *cæteris paribus*, that this pleasure will be most felt by those

who are gifted with much personal beauty, and whose features are most perfect of their kind; for in their case there is more than ordinary harmony between the soul and its fleshly envelope. Accordingly, no artist ever painted himself more than the beautiful Raphael. And we could name an eminent individual, now no more, as rarely gifted with physical beauty as with mental powers (Professor Wilson), to whom the contemplation of his portrait was almost a passion. No one less vain or more noble-hearted than he, yet his painted likeness had always a fascination for him. "It is a curious thing," he used to say, "how I like to look at my own portrait." Was it not because, in that beautifully developed form and countenance, the spirit within had most successfully embodied its ideal, with little or no hindrance from extrinsic circumstances, and accordingly rejoiced, though it knew not why, in the presence of its own likeness?

But to return to ethnography, and trace out the successive changes which have taken place in the population of Europe. As we have already observed, the great ebb and flow of nations was over by the Christian era. The population had become comparatively dense, so that room could no more be made for tribes of new-comers—and settled in their habits and occupations, so as no longer to admit of their shifting or being driven to and fro like waves over the land, as was the case while they were in the nomadic state. And as the nations became consolidated, they began, however feebly at first, to live a national existence, and to put forth national efforts of self-defence against those who assailed them. On these various accounts, the system of conquest by displacement, which marked the pre-historic and in a faint degree the early historic times, was brought to an end,—the conquests of the Northmen being the last examples of the kind; and these being hardly worthy of the name, as they were marked rather by the political predominance of the new-comers, and by an overlaying rather than by any displacement of the native

population. For all useful purposes, therefore, we may conceive that at the Christian era the various nations of Europe were arranged on the map very much as they are now,—the only exceptions worth mentioning being the influx of the Magyars and Turks, and the southward progress of several of the Slavonian tribes through the old Byzantine provinces into Greece.

"Had a Roman geographer of the days of the Empire," it has been well observed, "advanced in a straight line from the Atlantic to the Pacific, he would have traversed the exact succession of races that is to be met in the same route now. First, he would have found the Celts occupying as far as the Rhine; thence, eastward to the Vistula and Carpathian Mountains, he would have found Germans; beyond them, and stretching away into Central Asia, he would have found the so-called Scythians,—a race which, had he possessed our information, he would have divided into the two great branches of the Slavonians or European Scythians, and the Tartars and Turks, or Asiatic Scythians; and finally, beyond these, he would have found Mongolian hordes overspreading Eastern Asia to the shores of the Pacific. These successive races or populations he would have found shading off into each other at their points of junction. He would have remarked, also, a general westward pressure of the whole mass, tending toward mutual rupture and invasion,—the Mongolian pressing against the Tartars, the Tartars against the Slavonians, the Slavonians against the Germans, and the Germans against the Celts."

Although the early history and migrations of the Slavonians are involved in greater obscurity than that of either of the other two great branches of the European population, it is erroneous to suppose that they are a recent accession out of the depths of Asia. It was evidently a branch of them that Herodotus describes as peaceful, pastoral, and agricultural tribes located near the shores of the Black Sea. Instead of entering Europe *via* Asia Minor and the southern borders of

the Euxine, as many of the Celtic and Teutonic tribes did, they appear to have taken the route by the north of the Caspian and Black Seas, and probably advanced southwards into Europe on the gradual and ultimately sudden subsidence of the waters of the inland sea which, as we believe, primevally stretched from the Baltic eastwards to the Sea of Aral.

This race, which now constitutes the largest ethnographical unit of population in Europe, numbering nearly eighty millions, has never yet been examined in rigorous detail. The earliest and best developed of its tribes is the Polish, which, though it has in recent times been subjected by the Russo-Slavons aided by the German Powers, has not yet lost its nationality; and it is probable that, in the course of the future, the mighty Slavonic race will yet give rise to several distinct states. Both in features and complexion there is much diversity to be found in the various tribes which it comprises; but, if we consider the immense numbers of the race, and the different climes and temperatures under which they are located, it must be allowed that they are more homogeneous in character than any other people in Europe. The general type of the Slavonians, according to M. Edwards, is as follows:—"The contour of the head, viewed in front, approaches nearly to a square; the height surpasses a little the breadth; the summit is sensibly flattened; and the direction of the jaw is horizontal. The length of the nose is less than the distance from its base to the chin; it is almost straight from the depression at its root—that is to say, without any decided curvature; but, if appreciable, it is slightly concave, so that the end has a tendency to turn up; the lower part is rather large, and the extremity rounded. The eyes, which are rather deep-set, are [unlike those of the Tartars] perfectly on the same line; and when they have any particular character, they are smaller than the proportion of the head ought to indicate. The eyebrows are thin, and very near the eyes, particularly at the internal angle; and from

this point are often [like those of the Tartars] directed obliquely outwards. The mouth, which is not salient, has thin lips, and is much nearer to the nose than to the tip of the chin. Another singular characteristic may be added, and which is very general, viz., their small beard, except on the upper lip [a trait connecting them with the peoples of Upper Asia]. Such is the common type among the Poles, Alesians, Moravians, Bohemians, Slavonic Hungarians, and is very common among the Russians."

Having thus briefly and imperfectly glanced at the ethnographical features of Europe prior to the Christian era, we come now to note, equally briefly, the accession of foreign elements which the continent has received subsequently to that period. The first of these is the memorable one of the Jews. Unlike the other incomers, they came not as conquerors, nor in a mass —but as isolated exiles, seeking new homes where they might be suffered to preserve their religion and gain a livelihood. A warlike race when in the land of their fathers, in Europe they developed only that other feature of their nation, the passion for money-making. In pursuit of this object they have settled in every country of Europe; and, in spite of persecutions innumerable, continue to preserve to this day their religion and their national features. Despite the warm passions of the Hebrews, which, even when in their own land, repeatedly led both the people and their princes into the contraction of sexual alliances with other nations, the Jewish blood on the whole is still much purer than that of any other race—the foreign elements from time to time mingled with it being gradually thrown off by innumerable crossings and recrossings with the native stock. At present, on the lowest computation, there are about two millions of Jews in Europe, and in the rest of the world about a million and a half. The modern Jews, while preserving the national features, present every variety of complexion save black—for the *black* Jews of Malabar are not Jews at all, but the descendants of apostate Hindoos. In regard to the matter

of complexion, which varies so much with the climate and condition of the people, we shall say something by-and-by; but we may here give some remarks of Mr Leeser, a learned Jew of Philadelphia, on the curious diversities of complexion so remarkably observable among the Hebrew race:—

"In respect to the true Jewish complexion, it is *fair;* which is proved by the variety of the people I have seen, from Persia, Russia, Palestine, and Africa, not to mention those of Europe and America, the latter of whom are identical with the Europeans, like all other white inhabitants of this continent. All Jews that ever I have beheld are *identical in features;* though the colour of their skin and eyes differs materially, inasmuch as the Southern are nearly all black-eyed, and somewhat sallow, while the Northern are blue-eyed, in a great measure, and of a fair and clear complexion. In this they assimilate to all Caucasians, when transported for a number of generations into various climates. Though I am free to admit that the dark and hazel eye and tawny skin are oftener met with among the Germanic Jews than among the German natives proper. There are also red-haired and white-haired Jews, as well as other people, and perhaps of as great a proportion. I speak now of the Jews north: I am myself a native of Germany, and among my own family I know of none without blue eyes, brown hair (though mine is black), and very fair skin,—still I recollect, when a boy, seeing many who had not these characteristics, and had, on the contrary, eyes, hair, and skin of a more southern complexion. In America you will see all varieties of complexion, from the very fair Canadian down to the almost yellow of the West Indian—the latter, however, is solely the effect of exposure to a deleterious climate for several generations, which changes, I should judge, the texture of the hair and skin, and thus leaves its mark on the constitution — otherwise the Caucasian type is strongly developed; but this is the case more emphatically among those sprung from a German than a Portuguese stock. The latter was an original inhabitant of the Iberian Peninsula, and whether it

was preserved pure, or became mixed with Moorish blood in the process of centuries, or whether the Germans contracted an intimacy with Teutonic nations, and thus acquired a part of their national characteristics, it is impossible to be told now. But one thing is certain, that, both in Spain and Germany, conversions to Judaism during the early ages, say from the eighth to the thirteenth century, were by no means rare, or else the governments would not have so energetically prohibited Jews from making proselytes of their servants and others. I know not, indeed, whether there is any greater physical discrepancy between northern and southern Jews than between English families who continue in England or emigrate to Alabama—I rather judge there is not." *

The Huns and Magyars were the next tribes who made their way into Europe; and their advent, fierce, rapid, and exterminating, was conducted like a charge of cavalry. They hewed their way with the sword through the Slavonian and other tribes who impeded their march; and after being for a brief season the terror of Europe, they settled on the plains of Hungary, where for upwards of a thousand years they have dominated, like a ruling caste, over the surrounding Slavonic tribes. The influx of this warlike race took place by two migrations,—firstly, of the Huns, under Attila, in the fifth century; and, secondly, of the Magyars, under Arpad, in the ninth. The type of the two races was identical; it is peculiarly exotic, and unlike any other in Europe. It belongs to the great Uralian-Tatar stem of Asia; but, strangely enough, though they differ in type from the Fins, the Magyars speak a dialect of the Finnish language,—which shows that the two races must have been associated in some way at a remote epoch, and before either of them emerged from the depths of Asia. M. Edwards thus describes the Magyar type:—"Head nearly round; forehead little developed, low, and bending; the eyes placed obliquely, so that the external angle is elevated; the nose short and flat;

* *Types of Mankind*, p. 121.

mouth prominent, and lips thick; neck very strong, so that the back of the head appears flat, forming almost a straight line with the nape; beard weak and scattering; stature short." The Magyars do not belong to the Caucasian stock,—the Turks do so only doubtfully or partially; and the long-continued supremacy of these two Asiatic nations over populations decidedly Caucasian, is a nut to crack for those ethnographers who deduce everything from race, irrespective of the habits and state of development of particular nations.

The next alien race which entered Europe was the Gypseys, the history and peculiarities of which strange people present many curious analogies with those of the Israelites. "Both have had an exodus; both are exiles, and dispersed among the Gentiles, by whom they are hated and despised, and whom they hate and despise under the names of Busnees and Goyim; both, though speaking the language of the Gentiles, possess a peculiar language which the latter do not understand; and both possess a peculiar cast of countenance by which they may without difficulty be distinguished from all other nations. But with these points the similarity terminates. The Israelites have a peculiar religion, to which they are fanatically attached; the Romas (gypseys) have none. The Israelites have an authentic history; the Gypseys have no history,—they do not even know the name of their original country." Everything connected with the Gypsey race is involved in mystery; though, from their physical type, language, &c., it is conjectured that they came from some part of India. It has been supposed that they fled from the exterminating sword of the great Tartar conqueror, Tamerlane, who ravaged India in 1408-9 A.D.; but Borrow's work furnishes good ground for believing that they may have migrated at a much earlier period northwards, amongst the Slavonians, before they entered Germany and the other countries where we first catch sight of them. All that we know with certainty is, that in the beginning of the fifteenth century they appeared in Germany, and were soon scattered over Europe, as far as

Spain. The precise day upon which these strange beings first entered France has been recorded,—namely, the 17th of August 1427. The entire number of the race at present is estimated at about 700,000,—thus constituting them the smallest as well as the most singular and distinctly marked of races. But if their numbers be small, their range of habitat is one of the widest. They are scattered over most countries of the habitable globe—Europe, Asia, Africa, and both the Americas, containing specimens of these roving tribes. "Their tents," says Borrow, "are pitched on the heaths of Brazil and the ridges of the Himalaya hills; and their language is heard in Moscow and Madrid, in London and Stamboul. Their power of resisting cold is truly wonderful, as it is not uncommon to find them encamped in the midst of the snow, in slight canvass tents, where the temperature is 25° or 30° below the freezing-point according to Reaumur;" while, on the other hand, they withstand without difficulty the sultry climes of Africa and India.

The last accession which the population of Europe received was accomplished by an irruption similar to that of the Huns, but on a grander scale. In the beginning of the fifteenth century the Osmanli Turks swept across the Hellespont and Bosphorus, and in 1453 established their empire in Europe by the capture of Byzantium.' In proportion to its numbers, no race ever gave such a shock to the Western world as this; and, by its very antagonism, it helped to quicken into life the population and kingdoms of Central and Eastern Europe. It is semi-Caucasian by extraction, but, coming from a region far to the north-east, beyond the Altai Mountains, the original features of the race had a strong dash of the Tartar in them. The portrait of Mahomed II., the conqueror of Byzantium, which has come down to us, may be taken as a fair sample of the primitive Turkish type,—indeed a more than average specimen; for among all nations the nobles and princes, as a class, are ever found to possess the most perfect forms and features. Knolles says of Mahomed the Great: "His complexion was

Tartar-like, sallow, and melancholy, as were most of his predecessors, the Ottoman kings; his look and countenance stern, with his eyes piercing, hollow, and a little sunk into his head, and his nose so high and crooked that it almost touched his upper lip." The Turkish tribes who still follow their ancient nomadic life, and wander in the cold and dry deserts of Turkistan, still exhibit the Tartar physiognomy —even the Nogays of the Crimea, and some of the roving tribes of Asia Minor, present much of this character. The European Turks, and the upper classes of the race generally, exhibit a greatly superior style of countenance, in consequence of the elevating influences of civilisation, and of their harems having been replenished for four centuries by fair ones from Georgia and Circassia,—a region which, as Chardin long ago remarked, "is assuredly the one where nature produces the most beautiful persons, and a people brave and valiant, as well as lively, *galant*, and loving." There is hardly a man of quality in Turkey who is not born of a Georgian or Circassian mother,—counting downwards from the Sultan, who is generally Georgian or Circassian by the female side. As this crossing of the two races has been carried on for several centuries, the modern Ottomans in Europe are in some respects a *new nation*—and, on the whole, rather a handsome one. In the upper classes, the general proportion of the face is symmetrical, and the facial angle nearly vertical, — the features thus approaching to the Circassian mould; while the head is remarkable for its excellent globular form, with the forehead broad and the glabella prominent.

The natural destiny of the Turks in Europe, like that of ruling castes everywhere when holding in subjection a population greatly more numerous than themselves, is either gradually to relax their sway and share the government with the subject races, as the Normans in England did,—or, if obstinately maintaining their class-despotism, to be violently deposed from the supremacy. The increasing development of

the Greek and other sections of the population of European Turkey has of late years made one or other of these alternatives imminent. The extensive reforms and liberalisation of the government recently undertaken by the Ottoman rulers, and the remarkable abeyance in which they have begun to place the distinctive tenets of the Mohammedan faith, promised, if unthwarted by foreign influences, to keep the various races in amity, and admit Christians to offices in the state. The history of the last fifteen years has shown this system of governmental relaxation growing gradually stronger—so that Lord Palmerston was justified in saying that no country in the world could show so many reforms accomplished in so short a time as Turkey. And after the recent exploits of the Ottomans in resisting simultaneously the attacks of Russia on the Danube, and of the Greek and Montenegrin insurgents, and the Turkish predilections even of those provinces which were entered by the forces of the Czar, it cannot be doubted that, if unaided by foreign Powers, no insurrection against the supremacy of the bold-hearted Osmanlis had the slightest chance of success. It was this state of matters which alarmed the ambitious Czar into his aggression; for he felt that now or never was the time to interfere, if he did not wish to see a Turko-Greek state establish itself in such strength as to bid defiance to his power. We may add, that, whatever be the issue of the contest, it must tend to a further and higher development of the Turkish character. The contagion of Western ideas, disseminated in the most imposing of ways by the presence of the armies of England and France, cannot fail to impress itself on the slumbrous but awakening Ottomans, and not only expand their stereotyped civilisation into a wider and freer form, but possibly to strike also from their religion the more faulty and obstructive of its tenets.

Such are the elements of the present population of Europe, —a population which, in its western and southern portions, no longer presents distinct masses of diverse tribes, and whose

various sections every century is drawing into closer contact. The progress of commerce and civilisation produces not only an interchange of products of various climes, and of ideas between the various races of mankind, but also a commingling of blood; and as the most nobly developed races are always the great wanderers and conquerors, it will be seen that the progress of the world ever tends to improve the types of mankind by infusing the blood of the superior races into the veins of the inferior. The settlements of the Normans are an instance of this. And a still more remarkable, though exceptional, exemplification of the same thing may at present be witnessed in America—where the Negroes, transported from their native clime, have already become a mixed race, owing to the relation in which all female slaves stand to their masters, and the consequent frequent crossing of the European blood with the blood of Africa. In point of fact, there are slaves to be found in the Southern States, who, like "George" in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, are as Caucasian in their features and intellect as their masters,—a circumstance fraught with considerable danger to the White caste in these States, because producing the extremest irritation in these nearly full-blood "white slaves," and at the same time providing able and fiery leaders for the oppressed Negro race in the event of an insurrection and servile war.

But the great variety of countenance and temperament in Western and Southern Europe is not due merely to actual crossings of the commingling races. Civilisation itself is the parent of variety. The progress of humanity produces physical effects upon the race, which may be classed under two heads,—one of these being a general physical improvement, the other an increasing variety. Take an undeveloped race like the Tartars or Negroes, and you will find the aspect and mental character of the nation nearly homogeneous,—the differences existing amongst its individual members being comparatively trivial. Pass to the Slavonians, and you will

perceive this uniformity lessened; but when you reach the nations of Western Europe, you will find the transition accomplished, and homogeneity exchanged for variety. The explanation of this is obvious. Just as all plants of the same species, when in embryo, are nearly alike, undeveloped races of mankind present but few signs of spiritual life; and therefore their individual members greatly resemble one another,—because the fewer the characteristics, the less room is there for variety, and the more radical and therefore more universal must be the characteristics themselves. Pebbles, as they lie rough upon the sea-shore, may present a great uniformity of appearance; but take and polish them, and a hundred diversities of colour and marking forthwith show themselves: even so does civilisation and growth develop the rich varieties of human nature. As these mental varieties spring up within, they ever seek to develop themselves by corresponding varieties in the outer life,—placing men now in riches, now in poverty, now under the sway of the intellect, now of the passions, now of good principles, now of bad, and moreover leading to an infinite diversity of external occupation. The joint influence of the feelings within, and of the corresponding circumstances without, in course of time comes to affect the physical frame, often in a very marked manner; and, indeed, it is well known that even so subtle a thing as the predominant thoughts and sentiments of an individual are almost always reflected in the aspect of his countenance. Nations, when in a primitive uncultured state, differ as widely from those at the apex of civilisation, as the monotonous countenance and one-phased mind of a peasant contrasts with the rich variety of expression in the face of genius, whose nature is quickly responsive to every influence, though often steadied into a masculine calm. Let any one inspect some classes of the population of our large cities, and he will perceive an amount of physical, mental, and occupational variety such as he will meet with nowhere else in the world—presenting countenances deformed now by this form

of brutal passion, now by that, ranging upwards to the noblest types of the human face, the joint product of easy circumstances and of high mental and spiritual culture. It is all the result of civilisation, which ever tends to break up the uniformity of a population, and allows of its members rising to the highest heights or sinking to the lowest depths,—thus breaking the primitive monotony of life into its manifold prismatic hues.

Not the least remarkable of the physical changes thus produced by civilisation, is the diversity of complexion which it gradually effects. It appears certain, for example, that the races who peopled the northern and western parts of Europe, subsequent to the dark-skinned Iberians, were all of the fair or xanthous style of complexion; but this is by no means the case with the great mass of people who are supposed to have descended from them. "It seems unquestionable," says Prichard, "that the complexion prevalent through the British Isles has greatly varied from that of all [?] the original tribes who are known to have jointly constituted the population. We have seen that the ancient Celtic tribes were a xanthous race; such, likewise, were the Saxons, Danes, and Normans; the Caledonians also, and the Gael, were fair and yellow-haired. Not so the mixed descendants of all these blue-eyed tribes. The Britons had already deviated from the colour of the Celts in the time of Strabo, who declares that the Britons are taller than the Gauls, and less yellow-haired, and more infirm and relaxed in their bodies." The Germans have also varied in their complexion. The ancient Germans are said to have had universally yellow or red hair and blue eyes,—in short, a strongly marked xanthous constitution. This, says Niebuhr, "has now, in most parts of Germany, become uncommon. I can assert, from my own observation, that the Germans are now, in many parts of their country, far from a light-haired race. I have seen a considerable number of persons assembled in a large room at Frankfort-on-the-Maine, and observed that, except one or two Englishmen,

there was not an individual among them who had not dark hair. The Chevalier Bunsen has assured me that he has often looked in vain for the auburn or golden locks and the light cerulean eyes of the old Germans, and never verified the picture given by the ancients of his countrymen till he visited Scandinavia,—there he found himself surrounded by the Germans of Tacitus." In the towns of Germany, especially, the people are far from being a red-haired, or even a xanthous race; and, from the fact that this change has been developed chiefly in towns, we may infer that it depends in part on habits, and the way of living, and on food. Towns are much warmer and drier than the country; but even the open country is much warmer and drier than the forests and morasses with which Germany was formerly covered. The climate of Germany has, in fact, changed since the country was cleared of its vast forests; and we must attribute the altered physical character of the Germans to the altered condition under which the present inhabitants live.

It was the conquests of Rome that first scattered the seeds of civilisation in Western Europe. There it has grown up into a stately and nearly perfect fabric on the shores of the Atlantic, gradually losing its perfection as it proceeds eastwards, until it reaches the semi-barbarism of Russia, and the still deeper barbarism of Upper Asia. Our limits hardly allow of our inquiring what influence this civilisation is calculated to exert in future upon the ethnological condition of the Continent—although this is a question of great importance, as foreshadowing the chief changes which may be expected to result from the state of chronic strife upon which Europe has now entered. We can only remark that the grand action of progress and civilisation is to develop *the mind*, and so convert the units of society from a mass of automatons into thinking and self-directing agents,—conscious of, and able to attain, alike their own rights and those of their nation. Hence follows the growth of liberty within; and, without, the gradual establishment of union between scattered sections of the same race. Supposing, then, that the

progress of civilisation in Europe be unobstructed, we may calculate that wherever we now see internal despotism, there will be liberty,—wherever we see foreign domination, there will be national freedom; and that, after a little more training in the stern school of suffering, the Continental nations, grown wiser, will make an end of the present arbitrary and unnatural territorial system of Europe, and arrange themselves in the more natural, grander, and permanent communities of race.

It was doubtless a perception of this truth that caused the French Emperor recently to declare that "the age of conquests is past." We regret to think, however, that the statement is somewhat premature,—for Europe is still far from that happy climax of civilisation which in the preceding sentences we have indicated. Moreover, there are two very opposite periods in the life of nations when the race-principle reigns supreme, their first and their last: just as, in the case of individuals, men often adopt in old age, from the dictates of experience, principles which in youth they had acted upon from instinct. Now, Europe at this day presents both of these phases of national life existing simultaneously, at its eastern and western extremities; and it is not improbable that the development of the race-principle in its early form among the Slavonians, will take precedence of its development in maturity among the civilised races of the Continent. The Panslavism of Russia may precede the coalescing of the Teutonic tribes into a united Germany—or of the Romano-Gallic races of France, Spain, and Italy, into a trinity of confederate states. In such an event, would not this Panslavism of Russia, by a short-lived political domination, prove the very means of exciting the ethnological affinities of the rest of Europe, and of thereby raising up an insuperable barrier to its own progress, as well as involuntarily launching the other nations on their true line of progress?

The fag-end of an article is little suitable for the discussion of such really momentous topics, and we especially regret that we cannot proceed to consider the effects which the progress of

civilisation is likely to exert upon Russia itself. Any one, however, who is disposed to supply for himself the deductions from the above principles, will feel that his labour in so doing is not without its recompense, by establishing the consolatory truth that, so far as human eye can discern, "a good time coming" is yet in store for Europe,—though, alas, what turmoil must there be between this and then!

AUGUST 1854.

UTOPIAS

"Before you, had you morning's speed,
The dreamy land would still recede."

LIKE Sir Guy the Seeker wandering round the enchanted castle of his ladye-love, and even when his locks had grown grey, and his knightly arm had lost its vigour, still ardently hoping and longing for one more glimpse of the fair vision that had once long ago for a moment blessed his sight: even such is the belief in Utopias—a belief more of the heart than of the brain, and against which all the weapons of logic often fall broken and ineffectual. Every one has a utopia in his heart, though it may not have "a local habitation and a name." Every one pictures to himself scenes of ideal happiness, various as the spirits of their framers, but all lovely,—day-dreams which the heart delights to contemplate, but which Youth alone is ardent enough to hope to realise. This tendency has existed in every age; and hence the belief or superstition which is the subject of our remarks. But before proceeding further, our title may require an explanatory word.

In giving to an imaginary spot, in one of his Scottish novels, the title of Kennaquhair, Sir Walter Scott has very happily translated into Scotch the originally Greek term "Utopia." It is a place which has no latitude or longitude in physical geography; and which, accordingly, is a most suitable region wherein to place all that is too wonderful or too beautiful for

ordinary earth. The term, therefore, has been applied to those representations of a so-called perfect state of human society which Plato and many after him have delighted to draw. But it is not with such limbos of vanity that we have now to do. All the utopias of philosophers are "stale, flat, and unprofitable" when placed by the side of the living and lovely ideal worlds which have arisen like emanations from the heart of nations, and have become engrafted on their popular creeds. A sketch of these is what we now furnish. And when thousands are rushing to a new Eldorado on the banks of the Rio Sacramento, it may not prove uninteresting to review, among kindred subjects, the struggles of our forefathers after an equally alluring, though imaginary, land of promise.

The Greeks, who had all sorts of marvels, had a utopia also, in which the fancy of their poets could luxuriate untrammelled by the ordinary laws of nature; and this ideal realm they called the Garden of the Hesperides, and placed far away, nigh to the setting sun. As to its exact geographical position considerable diversity of opinion prevailed; and Hercules, their great hero for accomplishing impossibilities, had to inquire first of the nymphs of the Po, and subsequently of the all-knowing sea-god Nereus, as to its whereabouts, ere he started on his search. One old writer placed it "beyond the ocean;" but if plurality of votes is to decide the question, its site was near the foot of Mount Atlas. Here, in the country where, says Diodorus, all the gods of antiquity received their birth, sheltered by lofty mountains from the scorching blasts of the south wind, and with streamlets from the heights meandering through it, and flowing on all sides round it in a serpentine course, bloomed a fair garden, where grew all manner of delicious fruits; and Ovid, pleasing the eye and the fancy more than the palate, makes trees, foliage, fruit, all of gold. The beings who presided over this fair scene were the Hesperides, sister nymphs, varying in number, according to different authors, from three to seven; while a dreadful dragon,

which never slept, guarded the precincts from the intrusion of adventurous mortals. This monster is said to have had a hundred heads, and possibly had lives in proportion; but at last his extraordinary existence was cut short by Hercules, who carried some of the golden apples back with him into Greece: but Minerva, the goddess of wisdom, restored them to their native gardens, because she foresaw they could be preserved nowhere else on earth. Is not this conclusion of the legend finely allegorical of the distance existing between the world of imagination and the common life of man? As there are some who consider the widespread belief in "Isles of the Blessed" as the effect of vague traditional reminiscences of the lost Eden of our first parents, we may mention for their behoof that in Paris there is an antique medal (at least there *was* one last century: for aught we know, it may ere this have been melted down in the Revolutionary mint) representing Hercules and the dragon at the foot of the gold-fruited tree: and this medal, in the opinion of the Abbé Massieu, "but for the male sex of Hercules," would pass for a memorial of the temptation of Eve by the serpent.

The natives of India have a story of a great city named Baly having been submerged in the sea, whose gilded pinnacles were seen by their forefathers glittering above the waters, and whose streets are still visible in the clear depths of ocean. But as no one depones to having personally inspected this submarine abode (albeit the best of divers are on these coasts), we pass on to another which has been more fortunate in this respect, and whose story bears some resemblance to that of Jonah and Nineveh; with this difference, that in the present case the prophet would have had no occasion "to be angry" at the ultimate fate of the city. Amid the burning wastes of sand which lie between Abyssinia and Aden there once existed, say Mohammedan writers, a great city and lovely gardens, called the Paradise of Irem. But the king and people of the place (the tribe of Ad) were very wicked; so that the Prophet Houd

was sent to threaten them with judgments unless they repented. But they did not; and accordingly all, except the prophet, were destroyed; or, according to another version, turned into apes, which are still to be seen chattering in the neighbourhood. The city, we are told, is still standing in the deserts of Aden; but it is only visible to such as are privileged by God to behold it. This favour, it seems, has been enjoyed by one favoured mortal, Colabah by name, who, being summoned by the Caliph Moâwiyah, related how that, when he was seeking a camel he had lost, he found himself on a sudden at the gates of the city, and, "entering it, saw not one inhabitant; at which, being terrified, he stayed no longer than to take with him some fine stones, which he showed to the caliph."

Leaving the turbaned Mohammedans of the east, we shall find the imaginative spirit and vague aspirations of the northern races creating a utopia even more poetical, we think, than those hitherto noticed, and certainly exercising a more powerful influence over those who believed in its existence. Passing over, as apocryphal, Macpherson's legend of the Flath-innis, or Noble Island, authentic records show us the belief existing among the Welsh mountaineers, then just emerging from paganism. Looking from their native mountains, they beheld the sun setting, amid golden glories, over the waters of the western sea; and it was far away upon those sunset waves that they placed their utopian realm. They called it *Gwerdonnan Lian* —the Green Isles of Ocean, or the Green Spots of the Floods; and they deemed it a fairyland of bliss, where dwelt the souls of good Druids, who, being pagans, were not permitted to enter the Christian heaven. Yet, though thus the abode of spirits, it was nevertheless a material paradise: they considered that its happy shores were accessible to mortals, and that he who succeeded in reaching it, imagined on his return that he had been absent only a few hours, when in truth whole centuries had passed away. At times it was visible from land. "If you take a turf," says an old author, "from St David's

Churchyard, and stand upon it on the sea-shore, you behold these islands. One man," he adds, "once got sight of them by this means, and forthwith put to sea in pursuit; but they disappeared, and his search was vain. Nowise daunted, he returned, looked at them again from the enchanted turf, again set sail, and again was unsuccessful. The third time he took the turf on board with him, and stood upon it till he reached them."

Whether this fable originated in an optical delusion similar to the *Fata Morgana*,—in the prevalent tradition of the lost Atlantis, or large island in former times existing in the Western Ocean,—or in vague rumours of the American continent,—cannot be determined; but it is undoubted that the fable was received as sober truth by the Welsh. It is on record that several expeditions were undertaken for the discovery of the happy islands; and the "three losses by disappearance of the island of Britain," lamented by Welsh bards, appear to have all been connected with this search. The first of these was the expedition of Madoc, a Welsh prince, who sailed for the "far west," and who is believed to have reached Mexico; the second was that of Prince Gafran, who avowedly went in search of the *Gwerdonnan Liqn;* the third was that of the far-famed Merlin and his bards, who likewise voyaged for the west. Considerable dubiety, it is true, attaches to the accounts of the last of these "disappearances," as Merlin is said to have sailed in a ship of crystal. But let us be charitable. Would not a ship of iron have seemed more absurd to our Welsh ancestors than their "ship of crystal" seems to us? And when we make whole houses and palaces of glass, we may surely put ourselves for the nonce in a credulous spirit as we read of a crystal boat on such fairy seas.

A veil hangs over the fate of these adventurers: whether they triumphed, or whether they sank in mid-ocean, we know not. One thing alone is certain, that even in the savannas of the New World they were as far from success as ever. Islands

of the Blest, indeed, were not unheard of among the simple tribes; but they were known chiefly for the deceptive nature of their fascination. A belief of this kind still lingers among some of the American tribes; and in recent times Bertram mentions, in his *Travels through North and South Carolina*, that he found it entertained by the Creek Indians. The river St Mary, he tells us, has its source in a vast marsh nearly three hundred miles in circuit, which in the wet season appears as a lake, containing some large islands or knolls of rich land. One of these the Creeks represent as "a most blissful spot of earth;" and they say it is inhabited by a peculiar race of Indians, whose women are incomparably beautiful. This terrestrial paradise, they add, "has been seen by some of their enterprising hunters when in pursuit of game; but in their endeavours to approach it, they were involved in perpetual labyrinths; and, like enchanted land, still as they imagined they had just gained it, it seemed to fly before them, alternately appearing and disappearing." At length they resolved to abandon the delusive pursuit, and after many difficulties, they succeeded in retracing their steps. "When they reported their adventures to their countrymen, the young warriors were inflamed with an irresistible desire to invade and make a conquest of so charming a country; but all their attempts have hitherto proved abortive, never having been able again to find that enchanting spot."

Here, then, is the human spirit first creating an ideal paradise, and then pining for the work of its own fancy. Thus it is also with the most gifted sons of genius, upon whose spiritual eye or ear fall sounds and forms of more than earthly beauty, and who, even while enjoying the delights of human life, long for the realisation of day-dreams, nobler and more lovely far. Listen to the lay which the sweetest of female lyric poets puts into the mouth of the wild Indian of the prairies; and say, as he sings of the fascination of his Isle of Founts and its sparkling waters, if the picturesque strain be not emblematic of the enthusiastic

votary of high art, wrapt up in the ideal beauty which his soul beholds:—

"But woe for him who sees them burst
With their bright spray-showers to the lake!
Earth has no spring to quench the thirst
That semblance in his soul shall wake—
From the Blue Mountains to the main,
Our thousand floods shall roll in vain.

E'en thus our hunters came of yore
Back from their long and weary quest;
Had they not seen the untrodden shore?
And could they 'midst our wilds find rest?
The lightning of their glance was fled;
They dwelt amongst us as the dead!

They lay beside our glittering rills,
With visions in their darkened eye:"

—the visions of the dreamy land that once had glowed before them like a new Eden, and the memory of which so filled their hearts that there was no room left for any other joy. Thus, in ordinary life, do the imagination and exquisite susceptibilities which provide Genius with her divinest joys become to her at times the source of anguish. Pleasure and Pain enter by the same portals: and in this way is the lot of Genius reduced to little above that of mankind at large.

Having thus traversed the four quarters of the globe, and obtained glimpses of utopias of various kinds, and as variously tenanted—some by hoary Druids, others by beautiful women; some by apes, and some by nobody—we now start for the isles of the Pacific Ocean, to view the happy land of the Tonga people. Bolotoo—such is the name of this singular place—is a large island, they say, somewhere to the north-west of the Tonga group; but a long way distant. They deem it the abode of their gods; and certainly, by their account, animal and vegetable life proceeds there on very strange principles. Its fruits, flowers, birds, and *hogs*—in the last of which it abounds—are all of rare beauty (the pigs, we presume, not excepted): and they are immortal, unless when plucked or eaten

by the Hotooas, or gods; in which case a new pig, bird, or flower forthwith occupies the place of that destroyed. Like all places of the kind, it is very difficult to be found; but once on a time a Tonga canoe was driven thither by stress of weather. The crew were short of victuals, and not knowing where they were, they landed, and proceeded to gather some bread-fruit; but to their utter amazement they could no more grasp it than if it had been a shadow! They walked through the trunks of trees, and passed through the substance of the houses, without feeling any resistance; and at length the Hotooas themselves appeared, and completed the amazement of the Tongese by walking through *their* bodies as if they had been of air. "Go away immediately," said the Hotooas; "we have no proper food for you; and we'll give you a fair wind, and a speedy voyage home." Profiting by the good-natured offer, they put to sea directly; and after sailing for some days with the utmost velocity, they at last got safe to Tonga. But in a short space of time they all died—not as a punishment for having been at Bolotoo, but as a natural consequence—the air of Bolotoo, as it were, infecting mortal bodies with speedy death.

We cannot conclude this notice of the imaginary realms which fancy has located in various parts of the world, without adverting to the celebrated fable of El Dorado, which for ages dazzled and deluded the most gallant adventurers of Europe. Misled by the imperfect science of his day, the illustrious discoverer of the New World imagined that one part of Southern America was nearer the sun than the rest of the world; and influenced by the fervour of his imagination, and the novelty of the scenes around him, he deemed that there the original paradise of our race was to be found. This idea of Columbus seemed to be confirmed by the reports of the natives; and soon it became generally credited that a golden region existed in the interior of the country lying between the rivers Orinoco and Amazons. Its rocks were represented as impregnated with gold, the veins of which lay so near the surface as to make it

shine with a dazzling resplendency; and its capital—Manoa—was said to consist of houses covered with plates of gold, and to be built upon a vast lake called Parima, the sands of which were auriferous. Among the many stories told of this wealthy region, one Martinez, a Spaniard, deponed that, having been made prisoner by the Guianians, he was by them carried to their golden capital, where he remained several years, and was then conveyed blindfold to the borders, that he might not be able to make known the approaches to that envied principality. Von Huten and his companions in arms solemnly averred that they saw—but, by a body of ferocious Indians, with whom they had a long and bloody combat, were prevented from reaching—a place containing structures whose roofs shone with all the brilliancy of gold.

The tales of this golden land were not altogether fabulous, and the recent investigations of Humboldt afford an explanation of many of these recitals. When near the sources of the Orinoco, he informs us, he found the belief in El Dorado still existing among the natives, and he points out the district between the sources of the Rio Essequibo and the Rio Branco as furnishing the groundwork of the fiction. "Here, in a river called Parima, and in a small lake connected with it called Amucu, which is occasionally much augmented by inundations, we have basis enough on which to found the belief of the great lake bearing the name of the former; and in the islets and rocks of mica-slate and talc which rise up within and around the latter, reflecting from their shining surfaces the rays of an ardent sun, we have materials out of which to form that gorgeous capital whose temples and houses were overlaid with plates of beaten gold. . . . We may judge of the brilliancy of these deceptious appearances, from learning that the natives ascribed the lustre of the Magellanic clouds, or nebulæ of the southern hemisphere, to the bright reflections produced by them." Moreover, we find an old resident in Guiana representing part of the country as abounding in "mines of white stone, in which are

much natural and fine gold, which runneth between the stones like veins." Another says—"The high country is full of white sparre; and if the white sparres of this kind be in a main rock, they are certainly mines of gold or silver, or both. I made trial of a piece of sparre, and I found that it held both gold and silver, which gave me satisfaction that there be rich mines in the country." So late as the middle of last century, a Spanish company attempted to extract gold from these alluring rocks; but after great loss had been incurred, the undertaking was abandoned. Yet am I disposed to attach so much faith to the old traditions that I expect to see gold-seeking ere long resumed in the actual region of this old Eldorado.

Though enterprise succeeded enterprise to discover this fabulous kingdom, each new adventurer experienced little difficulty in finding comrades to embark with him. The excitement in Europe was extraordinary. In Spain, we are told, "the desire to be included in the adventure excited an eager competition, and led multitudes to dispose of their property—even landed estates—never doubting to be repaid tenfold from the treasures of Eldorado." For long the belief lingered in the hearts of men. In the early part of last century the Jesuit Gumilla unhesitatingly embraced the old opinion; and about 1770, Don Manuel Centurion, then governor of Spanish Guiana, was so ardent in his faith, that one more expedition set out on this luckless enterprise. Of this party only one man returned to narrate the disasters which had overwhelmed his comrades!

Thus terminated the dream of the golden utopia; and with its sad tale of rash enthusiasm we close our sketches. If of less airy form than its predecessors, it was equally delusive as they, and infinitely more fatal to the enthusiastic spirits who adventured on its search—foremost and noblest among whom was our own gallant Raleigh. All the sufferings of those ardent adventurers—some in search of riches, others with the higher but still vainer dream of Eden in their hearts—hardly convinced them that Eldorado was but a fiction of their heated fancy.

Toiling onwards in courageous hope, everything seemed to them to announce their approach to the golden land: rocks of mica glittering in the sunbeams were its golden barriers, the hues of sunset were its gorgeous skies. But vanity of vanities was all their searching. Hunger and pestilence and fatigue thinned their ranks and bowed their spirits; and many a gallant heart, worthy of a nobler fate, thus fell a victim to its high-wrought fancies amid the wilds of Guiana,—

> "All o'erspent with toil and anguish,
> Not in glorious battle slain!"

OUR INDIAN EMPIRE

In ancient Rome, the triumphal processions that ever and anon passed along the Via Sacra, "purpling the street," served vividly to impress the minds even of the unthinking masses with the grandeur and far-reaching extent of the empire that owned the sway of the Legions. Stalwart Angli and blue-eyed Germans, —Persians and Parthians from their Orient hills and sands,— a queen from lonely Palmyra, Jews torn from Jerusalem, dusky slaves from the Nile,—paintings and godlike statues from Greece, alternating with troops of wild beasts of strange aspect or startling bulk from the African deserts,—passed in turn before the proud eye of the Roman multitude. Living symbols and brilliant samples of the various provinces and conquests were transported bodily and exhibited solemnly in the Imperial City. We have a homelier way of doing things now. Europe, as she gets older, is losing her regard for pageantry. Far in the depths of Scythia, indeed—in a region then so waste that Roman Legionary never pressed its soil—we recently witnessed, on the coronation of the Czar, a sudden outburst of imperial pageantries, which find a parallel only in the pages of Roman history or in the sculptured processions of the ancient Empires of the Orient. It needs symbol and ceremony, and a mighty dazzle at Moscow, to pierce the wastes of Muscovite darkness, and make known to the dull unlettered *mujik* the might and resources of the Czar. But the British people know and read, and their Government speaks to

them simply through blue-books and the press. It is in this unostentatious way that, to the nation at large, is made known the condition of the various parts of our far-spread empire. From Canada and snowy Oregon, from Jamaica and the tropical Islands of the Gulf, from New Zealand and Australia, from India and our settlements in the Pacific, official reports are ever pouring into the little island of the North Atlantic which has bred the lordly race that owns all those possessions. These reports of our prefects are our true triumphal processions. And if they elicit less fervid emotions and Io-pæans than saluted the purple Triumphs of the Roman chiefs, they at least tell their tale more clearly and to a wider audience, and give better assurance that the national rejoicing is not bestowed upon a mask, but upon a reality.

The proud phlegm natural to the Briton, and the familiarity with success taught him by the marvellous past of his nation, conspire to make him the most impassible of men in presence of triumphs, though sufficiently impatient of failure or reverse. Silence with him is approbation. He is often most satisfied when he says nothing. As long as he is satisfied, he exhibits an indifference that must be provoking to those who strive for his regard. And if the statesmanly exploits be not done within the parent isle of his race—that goodly nook wherein he has garnered up wealth and power untold, and every acre, right, or custom in which is sacred in his eyes,—but in one of our colonies or empires beyond the seas, it is hopeless to expect from John Bull the slightest mark of enthusiasm. Once a year, and generally in the last days of the session, there is gone through in the House of Commons a piece of work which seems to be regarded by every one as a bore. A gentleman rises on the Ministerial benches, and, undismayed by the general secession of the House, delivers a three hours' speech to the thirty Members or so who still keep their places. At almost any time during the delivery of this oration the proceedings could be abruptly terminated by a "count out;" but as it is not a question of home politics, the

Minister is allowed to bring his lengthy address to a close. It is the Indian Budget speech; and the House has been listening to a report on the state and prospects of an empire one-half the size of Europe, and comprising an eighth part of the entire human race. But with the exception of some Manchester politician, who thinks that India grows too little cotton, or some lawyer, who holds a brief from a deposed Rajah, no one rises to comment or discuss,—the House turns with alacrity to other business, and the speech is left to be circulated and criticised by the press.

If not by our legislators, at least by the general public, the actual vastness, importance, and peculiarities of our Indian Empire are yet but imperfectly appreciated. We regard it too much in the light of a simple dependency of the British Crown, —forgetful that its civil and military establishments rival those of the greatest European Power, and that in amount of population it is equalled by no empire in the world save the monster-fabric of China. In our ordinary atlases it figures to the eye no larger than our own country, or any of the medium-sized kingdoms of the Continent; but in actual fact, it embraces a million and a half of square miles, and is larger than all Europe, exclusive of Russia. England, Scotland, and Ireland might all be packed into the limits of the single Bombay presidency; Madras would hold Norway and Denmark; the Punjab and North-west Provinces equal Spain; and the Bengal presidency exceeds in size all France. And yet, nearly one half of the Indian peninsula, comprising the native States, remains to be accounted for! The lately-acquired territories, annexed by Lord Dalhousie—namely, the Punjab, Pegu, Oude, Nagpore, Berar, &c.—have of themselves an area of 118,000 square miles, equalling in extent the United Kingdom. Oude, our latest and dearly bought acquisition, nearly equals Ireland both in size and population. Nor let the common error be indulged, that these vast territories of our Indian empire are thinly peopled, or little better than barbaric wilderness.

Taking India as a whole, it is as densely peopled as the most advanced countries in Europe; so that, while in area it equals Europe *minus* the thinly-peopled wastes of Russia, in population it falls but little short of the same favoured segment of the earth. The North-west Provinces, indeed, with a lesser area than England and Scotland, actually exceed them in population, and are only equalled in proportion of people to territory by the small state of Belgium.* And yet India, say our best authorities, is less populous now than formerly.

Very varied are the units that make up this vast population of India, and in every part there is a great variety of classes dwelling together, in many points altogether dissimilar. "Although there are many classes, almost all the classes are found more or less everywhere; and hence the same general features of society exist alike in every part of India, even when there is a considerable difference in personal appearance and language. In effect it has become one country; and though many different races have entered it, and have been by peculiar institutions kept in many respects separate, each has in its own sphere pervaded the country. All have become united in one common civilisation—the same system of Hindoo polity has been overlaid by the same system of Mohammedan government—inhabitants of one part of the country have served, travelled, and done business in all other parts indiscriminately; and so altogether, while the different degrees in which different elements have been mixed, produce exterior differences, the essential characteristics of all are the same."† Nevertheless it is

* England, Scotland, and Wales, with an area of 90,000 square miles, had in 1850 a population of 21 millions; while the North-west Provinces of India, with an area of only 86,000 square miles, had a population of 24 millions! The rate of population in these North-west Provinces per square mile is 322—in Belgium it is 323. But as the former are eight times larger than the latter, districts could easily be found in the Indian provinces exceeding in density of population the 11,000 square miles of Belgium.

† CAMPBELL'S *Modern India and its Government*, p. 36-37.

a marked characteristic of India, that while the population is thus to a certain extent *socially* one, they have no *political* unity whatever. "Not only have the Mohammedans and Hindoos no political feeling in common; but no two tribes, classes, or castes of Hindoos pull together in politics. This, which in the first instance is no doubt in a great degree the consequence of political slavery, is now still more the cause of it. Natives of different classes associate much together, have their alliances and enmities in common; but employ one of them in the service of Government, and he has no particle of political sympathy beyond his own subdivision of a class, if even so much. Political nationality there is none. Even in matters of public concernment between the people and the Government, there is little public spirit. They have so long lived under an alien and despotic government, that they feel little bound to assist it; so that if, in the pursuit of criminals and such matters, a native is immediately touched himself, he is active enough, but so long as this is not the case, he moves not in the matter, and renders little assistance."*

Owing to a better climate and immigrations of hardy northern tribes, Northern India contains a finer population than the South, where remnants of inferior aboriginal tribes mingle with and deteriorate the Hindoo stock. The Hindostanees—who form the bulk of the population north of the Vindhya range, which extends from Bombay to Cuttack—are in physical appearance, excepting colour, very like Europeans, and evidently belong to the same great division of mankind. The features and cast of countenance are indeed identical, and their general height and size are nearly as great. The Brahmins of the north, the Rajpoots, and the Jats, are fine men,—the meaner classes are naturally meaner-looking, but even among the lowest class of all (the unclean outcasts) may be found as fine men as any. The mercantile classes are at once the fairest and most Hindoo-looking—circumstances mainly attributable

* CAMPBELL, p. 62-63.

to their indoor occupations and stricter exclusiveness. Our early popular ideas of the mildness and effeminacy of the Hindoos were derived from the Bengalees, and are by no means characteristic of the general population of India. The Indian race have a fair share of courage and energy. They fight well when properly led, and have less fear of death, and sometimes do more reckless things, than Europeans; but they have less steady pluck, and are easily disheartened by reverses. In their normal condition they are rather a gentle-hearted race, but they alter chameleon-like with circumstances, and are almost destitute of fixed moral principle; and when particular individuals or classes (like the Thugs and Dacoits) make blood a profession, they display a coolness and insensitiveness which we could hardly attain. In natural talent they are by no means inferior to Europeans. Their intellects are excellent, and they exhibit a mathematical clearness of head, and talent for figures and exact sciences, which is less general with us. The lower classes show unusual acuteness and aptness to learn. They are to the full as good and intelligent as the same classes with us; indeed, they are much more versed in the affairs of life, plead their causes better, make more intelligent witnesses, and have many virtues. But these good qualities do not exist in a corresponding proportion in the higher classes, who do not bear prosperity well. "The lowest of the people, if fate raise him to be an emperor, makes himself quite at home in his new situation, and shows an aptitude of manner and conduct unknown to Europeans similarly situated; but his son is altogether degenerate."

British sway now dominates over the whole peninsula of India. All within the outer girdle of mountains, formed by the snow-capped Himalayas and the sterile Suleyman range, British power is supreme; and from Attock in the north-west, to Comorin in the south, two thousand miles of territory own the guardianship of the Viceroy of England. But here, on the very threshold, a grave error may be committed, if we do not

discriminate. The defence and imperial government of the whole of India rests with Britain, but British India, the territories actually taxed and directly ruled by us, comprises only half the peninsula. In round numbers, 690,000 square miles, and a hundred millions of people, are directly under British rule; while 670,000 square miles, and fifty millions of people, are ruled by Native princes, protected for the most part, internally as well as externally, by the British Government, but contributing little or nothing to the treasury at Calcutta. The consequence of this is, speaking generally, that we have to provide for the defence and imperial government of the whole of India, while we draw the revenues of little more than half of it in extent and two-thirds of it in population. We need not wonder, then, that the Indian revenue should at times fall short of the charges upon it; or that the large surpluses occasionally acquired by the Mogul emperors, ruling despotically over the entire peninsula, should be looked for in vain under the present regime. Moreover, not only are the revenues of half of India still exempted from our control, but the acquisition of many portions of our present territories has been accompanied by obligations so onerous, as to be creditable rather to the generosity than the wisdom of our Indian rulers. Nearly a million and a quarter sterling is annually due from the sore-pressed Indian treasury to a dozen deposed Nawabs and Rajahs and their families, or to the descendants of the same for ever,—unless by good fortune they become extinct. All of these men (except the late King of Delhi) were mere mushroom princes,—creatures of yesterday, counting sometimes but a single generation of brief-lived authority,—men who had raised themselves to the musnud by rebellion, assassination, or the sword,—representatives of no nationality, and liable at any time to be supplanted in the same way as they rose. Policy, indeed, demanded that we should soften their descent from the musnud, and generosity dictated a similar course; but would it not have been better if the pensions, instead of being for all time, had

been made in the form of terminable and decreasing annuities? We find £160,000 still paid to the descendant of Meer Jaffier, a mock Nawab of Bengal created by ourselves (!), besides £90,000 to the families of former Nawabs of the same province, —£116,000 to the descendant of the Nawab of the Carnatic, a functionary likewise created by ourselves,—£118,000 to the descendant of the Rajah of Tanjore, a petty military chief,— £64,000 to the families of Hyder and Tippoo, descendants of an upstart usurper, and our bitterest enemy, who fought to the last, and with whom no terms were made,—and other suchlike pensions, which hamper our empire, and lay a million and a quarter of taxation upon the backs of our Indian subjects.

Nothing can be done without money. Therefore, before considering what progress has been made in improving the social, industrial, and political condition of our Indian empire, it behoves us to see what are the "ways and means" at the disposal of the Indian Government. Since the great mutiny of our Sepoy army, changes, which may be termed a revolution, have been made both in the financial and military systems of our Indian empire. And we shall better understand the present position of affairs if we glance at what existed prior to the mutinies.

In 1856-7, the gross revenue of British India amounted to rather more than thirty-three millions sterling; from which there fell to be deducted the charges of collection, amounting to about four millions, and the pensions to native princes and other assignments, amounting to nearly two and a half millions,—leaving a net revenue from all our possessions of fully twenty-six and a half millions. More than one-half of the gross revenue was derived from the land-tax; nearly one-sixth from opium; fully one-tenth from salt and excise duties, (the excise yielding only £1,000,000); one-eleventh from customs and stamps; and the remainder was made up of various imposts, ordinary and extraordinary, the produce of which was trifling compared with their cost of collection. Of

the expenditure, the military establishment alone consumed about fifty-six per cent, and the marine about two per cent; the civil administration cost about twenty-five per cent, the home establishments about three per cent, and fourteen per cent went for the interest of money expended in acquiring the country,—being dividend on stock and the interest of the Debt. Then, as now, the three presidencies contributed in very different measures to the revenue. The Bengal presidency —including the North-west Provinces, Oude, and the Punjab— with a net revenue of sixteen millions, yielded a surplus of fully five and a half millions; Madras, with a net revenue of three and a quarter millions, gave a surplus of half a million; and Bombay, with a net revenue of two and a half millions, showed a deficit of a third of a million. Bengal is thus the most paying of the three presidencies; but as the opium-tax may be considered rather as an imperial than a local source of revenue, and as in 1856 two and a half millions sterling of this tax was raised in Bengal, this amount ought to be deducted in comparing the profitableness of the separate presidencies; and a deduction of more than three-quarters of a million must on the same account be made from the revenue of Bombay. Madras grows no opium, and contributes not so far short of its fair share of revenue; but Bombay is in every respect the chief source of loss. The public debt of India amounted in 1856-7 to fifty-five millions, and there was also a bond debt at home of four millions; and the interest upon these formed an annual charge on the revenue of two and a quarter millions.

To meet the immense expenditure incurred on account of the mutiny, it became necessary to impose new taxes, and to increase some of the old ones; and though it seems impossible that any more can be effected in that direction, yet the results which have been attained must be considered very satisfactory. Since 1858 the revenue has been increased in this manner by nearly five millions and a half sterling.

The new customs tariff, which came into operation early in 1859, has added to the revenue a million and a half sterling; the income-tax, after paying all expenses, is estimated to yield nearly the same sum; the duty on salt has been increased, so as, without undue pressure upon the people, to augment the revenue by a million and a half; and another million has been obtained by a slight extension of the stamp, and an increase in the opium duties, as well as by the imposition of a trade tax in the Punjab. The licence-tax has not yet been enforced, but when it is modified, so as to be levied in conjunction with the income-tax, another half million may be anticipated. So that it is probable that the additional revenue derivable from these new taxes, after allowing for every probable fluctuation in their yield, will amount to not less than six millions a-year.

The revenue of our Indian empire appears small when compared with that of Great Britain; but if there be deducted from each the interest of its public debt, it will be found that the available revenue of the two countries is not very dissimilar in amount. The great difference between the financial state of the two empires does not consist in the larger revenue enjoyed by the British Government in ordinary times, but in the capacity of the United Kingdom to greatly increase its revenue on extraordinary occasions, whereas our Indian territories cannot do so. The enormous amount of realised wealth in the British Isles forms a reservoir from which large drafts may be made by the Government in extraordinary times; but there is little accumulated wealth in India, the great mass of the people having just enough to procure themselves the means of existence. Hence the amazing elasticity of British finances compared with those of India, or indeed with those of any other country.

In ordinary times the Indian revenue is equal to the charges upon it; and the Public Debt has been occasioned by the extraordinary expenses of war. Wars—wars forced upon us

and inevitable—while adding new provinces to our empire, have been the great impediments to our financial progress. But it is childish to expect to get an empire without having to pay for it. The first Burmese war, in 1824-6, of itself cost fifteen millions of money. In 1835-6, at the close of Lord Bentinck's peaceful administration, the financial embarrassment produced by the Burmese war had been allayed, and there was a surplus of nearly a million and a half. In the following year, the surplus was a million and a quarter; in the next, three-quarters of a million. In the next year (1838-9) the surplus had altogether disappeared, and the awkward word "deficit" appeared in the accounts. Then came the Affghan war; and the deficit for the year 1839-40 amounted to more than two millions sterling. From this time to the year 1848-9 (which period embraces the campaigns in Scinde and Gwalior and the two wars with the Sikhs) there was an average deficiency of a million and a half a-year. In consequence, the Debt, which was under thirty millions in 1836, reached nearly forty-seven millions in 1850. In the following year a surplus reappeared, to the extent of half a million, and a similar surplus was obtained in 1852-3; but in the following three years, there was incurred a deficit of nearly six millions. This deficit, however, unlike its predecessors, was no loss; for it was occasioned by the Government expenditure on public works, which will soon be sources of profit to the State, —and also by paying off a portion of the Indian Debt, on occasion of the conversion of the Five-per-cent loan into Three-and-a-half per cents. To show the true state of the case, we may mention that the estimated deficit for the year 1856-7 was £1,635,520, while the amount to be expended on public works was £1,734,000: so that, but for that profitable outlay on public works, the yearly revenue would have more than equalled the yearly expenditure.

But when prosperity seemed so near at hand, the mutiny suddenly shook our authority to its foundation, and in a few years almost doubled the Indian debt. From 1857 to 1860 the

deficits became alarming,—the deficit for 1859 was upwards of fourteen millions sterling, and the total deficit for the three years was thirty-eight millions: so that in 1860 the debt had risen to ninety-three millions sterling; and the interest on the debt, which was two and a quarter millions in 1856, amounted in 1860 to £3,160,000.

The revenues of every country fluctuate from year to year, both in the mass and in detail; and this is especially the case with India at present, owing to the recent acquisitions of territory and financial changes. Our brief exposition, however, will, we hope, convey to the reader a general idea of the Indian finances, without plunging him into a host of wearisome and perplexing details. What cannot fail to strike the mind, and perhaps excite the curiosity of even a cursory reader of the preceding statement, is the widely different nature of the Indian taxes from those customary in Europe. A land-tax, for instance, yielding one-half of the entire revenue, is something strange to us in Europe,—so is a salt-tax yielding three and a half millions, and an opium-tax yielding six millions; while the trifle derived from the customs and excise and income-tax (7½ millions in all), are arrangements equally novel and enviable. To understand these peculiar features of Indian finance, one must understand the people and country. When we find the great mass of the people eating nothing but maize or rice, and wearing nothing but a cotton rag round their middle, the impotency of excise or customs will be apparent, and the regrettable necessity for a salt-tax will be better understood. When we find throughout India a general absence of large fortunes and a wealthy middle-class, it becomes obvious that a tax on property cannot be very productive. And, finally, the remarkable adherence of the people to ancient practice, and their aversion to direct taxation, are facts which solve the rest of the mystery, and show that in continuing the taxative system which we found in operation in India, we acted not only from necessity, but on the whole for the best. In succeeding to the

empire of India, we found no *tabula rasa* whereon to write what we pleased, but a taxative system which in its general features had been in operation for two thousand years. The very slowness of our progress to supremacy,—incorporating at intervals here a district and there a province,—prevented the adoption of any comprehensive scheme founded on European notions of administration. And in this fact lies the key to our success. For had we, instead of falling in with the customs and spirit of the country, presumptuously introduced a new system fabricated according to our English ideas of administrative perfection, we should have shocked so many prejudices, and infringed so many rights, that the empire of India would have crumbled under our grasp. Even now, when our rule is securely established, the financial changes recently introduced have occasioned very grave forebodings on the part of some eminent Indian statesmen, and have encountered no small opposition on the part of the native community.

When the British first began the work of administration in their Indian territories, the most novel and perplexing feature that presented itself to them was the relation of the Government and people to the soil. The great mass of the population are entirely dependent for support upon the land. The means of existence are easily procurable in India: the warmth of the climate, the fertility of the soil, and the simple wants of the people, combine to make living a much easier thing there than with us. There are there no poor-rates, by which with us the prosperous are made to support the destitute: but the land, to the cultivation of which the masses have from time immemorial devoted themselves, is (speaking generally) regarded as a vast raw material, for the manufacture of which into the means of support every facility is given. The common law or usage of India has from the most ancient times established a species of Tenant-right, in virtue of which no peasant can be dispossessed of his ground as long as he pays the rent; and even this rent is no arbitrary thing, but is regulated by what is called the

"Pergunnah rates," or rate usual in the district. Thus land is not such an absolute property there as with us. In truth, landed property in India confers a right rather to the rent than to the soil itself; and any sale of land, while transferring the rent, cannot dispossess the cultivators. As long as the cultivators pay the rent, there can be no "evictions," neither can the proprietor interfere to defraud the tenant of the benefit of the improvements he has effected. This is the general rule, and is what ought to prevail universally; unfortunately in some districts, especially Lower Bengal, our ignorance of Indian usages led us to establish an order of things by which these tenant-rights of the people were permitted to be seriously infringed. So much for the relation of the Cultivators to the soil.

The relation of the Proprietors to the land opens to us fresh novelties. There are different kinds of proprietorship. First, there is the Zemindaree tenure, or large-property system, where a large extent of ground is owned (or rather its rents drawn) by a single individual,—or by two or three joint-owners, who make no division of the estate, but simply draw fractional portions of the rent; and these Zemindars hold their properties on condition of paying a certain amount of land-revenue to the Government. Secondly, there is the Ryotwaree system, by which the cultivator is likewise the proprietor; or rather, under which there is no middleman or quasi-proprietor between the peasant and the Government, and the former pays rent in the form of land-tax directly to the latter. Thirdly, there is the Putteedaree or village-community system,—the most interesting of all, but which requires a word of explanation. Although the people of India are almost entirely devoted to agricultural and (but in a much lesser degree) to pastoral pursuits, there is not a rural population in our sense of the word. Their habitations are not scattered over the face of the country, but are always massed together in towns and villages; and to each village a certain district is attached. This circumjacent district is owned by and allotted amongst the members of the village-community,

—not now equally, indeed; for under every form of society, save those supposed to exist in Utopia, it is found that perpetual equality is impossible, and that land, like everything else, tends to accumulate in the hands of the able and industrious, and to melt away from the lazy or stupid. Moreover, in many of these village-communities, there exists a species of oligarchy, composed of one or more leading families, evidently the descendants of conquerors or dominant interlopers in ancient times, who are now the quasi-proprietors, and draw the rents of the village-lands. In these Putteedaree districts the owners, though themselves cultivators, seldom cultivate the whole of their respective portions: the remainder, parcelled into allotments, is let to the "common herd" of ryots resident in the village,—and partly also to ryots who belong to other villages, and who (unlike the resident ryots) are mere tenants-at-will, because having no "settlement" in that community. Each cultivator bears his share in the Government assessment of the village-district, which is collected by the Potail or head of the community, with whom alone the Government deals,—the community being ultimately liable for the default of any of its members.

Such are the three modes of Land-settlement in India. The Ryotwaree system prevails in Madras and Bombay, the Zemindaree in Bengal Proper, and the Putteedaree in the North-western Provinces. Each has its peculiar defects and advantages. The defect of the Ryotwaree system is, that when bad seasons or other calamities visit the lands, then remission, and not only remission, but actual assistance from the Government, becomes necessary to keep the ryot from ruin, and to enable him to labour effectively for the future: all which requires an amount of minute superintendence, by upright and zealous men, such as it is impossible for any Government to afford. Otherwise the Ryotwaree system would be the most perfect of any. The other two systems, while not possessing some of the advantages of the Ryotwaree tenure, at least escape its great defect; be-

cause they bring into play an intermediate class, having a permanent interest in the soil, whose profits enable them to accumulate capital and lay it out in aid of the ryots when necessary. Such a class is the Zemindars, and also the Potails and members of the village-communities. The latter or Putteedaree system, though not universally adoptable, appears to us the best; for, while relieving the Government of much trouble, and leaving each community to manage its own affairs, under it the right of the cultivator is recorded and respected, so as to prevent rack-renting on the part of the proprietors. The Zemindaree system has not prevented rack-renting; and moreover, the valuation of land having been permanently *fixed* in Bengal, and not liable to revision at intervals of years as is the case elsewhere, the Government unduly loses thereby. It must be allowed, however, that a much greater extent of land has been brought into cultivation under the Zemindaree system than under the others; so that, if the Government has been a loser, there has at least been an important accumulation of capital in private hands. Every traveller is struck with the thriving aspect of the Bengal districts where this system prevails. The jungle has entirely disappeared; and a man may go for miles in any direction west and north of Calcutta, and see plains succeeding to plains where there is not one *bigah* of unproductive soil. And it has been asked,—"Is it fair to say that all these results are independent of the Perpetual Settlement?" Not all of them, certainly, but many of them are so; for the provinces where that settlement was introduced were the most thriving in India, —they have enjoyed nearly a century of unbroken peace,— their natural fertility is remarkable, and they can dispense with the costly system of artificial irrigation.

The great moot point respecting the Zemindaree system is the manner in which it affects the ryots or peasantry. Some able men maintain that the peasantry of Bengal cannot be said to be worse off than the peasantry of any other part of the world; while others, with at least equal show of reason,

maintain the reverse. These latter urge, that although many classes in Bengal, more especially artisans, shopkeepers, gardeners, and money-dealers, have prospered under our rule, the peasantry have been raised but little from their ancient state of degradation; and that in some districts they have been reduced to a condition which is practically pauperism. One of the most competent writers on the subject takes this latter view, and adds —"The low condition of the cultivators is borne out by the continued prevalence of the crime of dakoity, or robbery by gangs, with open violence, in spite of great improvements in the police and constant attention to it. Now, this crime has entirely disappeared in the North-west Provinces since the new settlement, which secured to the cultivating ryots moderate and fair rents. It is evident that where there is a regular government and police, and yet predatory crimes cannot be checked, the cause must lie in the misery and desperation of a large class of the community. At least this must be evident to men familiar with, and accustomed to analyse, the workings of government."* The "perpetual settlement," as made by Lord Cornwallis, provided that the ryots should not pay higher rents than the Pergunnah rates,—*i. e.*, the customary though variable rates of rent on particular soils and produce, prevailing in the district,—and that beyond the rent they should pay nothing. "These laws," says Mr Robinson, "are still on the statute-book, though, to the great detriment of the country, they have not, from the want of sufficient machinery, and sufficient knowledge in the early administrators, been carried out." In truth, in the early part of our Indian administration we were but groping. And it could not be otherwise; for the country, the language, and the habits of the people were alike strange to us; and moreover, owing to the long prevalence of adverse circumstances, we found the native municipal institutions and territorial usages in some

* *An Account of the Land-Revenue of British India.* By F. H. ROBINSON, late Member of the Board of Revenue, North-west Provinces. 1856.

measure obscured, and the population themselves in an abnormal condition.

The occurrence of the recent disturbances in the indigo districts may seem confirmatory of the alleged oppression of the peasantry; but such a deduction becomes less tenable as the question is investigated. A special commissioner, appointed by the Government (Mr Morris), as the result of his personal observations and inquiries, expresses his conviction that "the ryots have, as a rule, wilfully and without sufficient cause withheld payment of their rents; and that this recusancy on their part has derived its force mainly from the ill feeling that has sprung up in their minds towards the European planters on the subject of indigo cultivation." Until the recent enhancement in the price of cereals, the ryots never dreamed of offering any objection to the cultivation of indigo; but when they discovered that it would pay them better to grow rice, they naturally showed reluctance to cultivate a less remunerative crop. But they were under a double engagement to cultivate indigo on a certain portion of their lands: for they had received advances of seed and money on that specified condition; and their very lands also were let to them on low terms with the same proviso. When the planters found that the ryots would no longer grow indigo, they naturally resolved to raise their rents,—although no alteration was made in those cases where the ryots were willing to continue to grow indigo. Thereupon the peasantry refused to pay, and compelled the planters to sue for every sixpence of arrears in the courts. It was virtually a combination on the part of the peasantry, and violence and intimidation were in some cases employed to prevent any of their number from working for the English planters. The deplorable result was, that litigation increased forty-fold! The suits connected with indigo factories in the Jessore district, which in the year ending 30th April 1860 were eighty-two, in the following year were no fewer than 3619! And the sums due by the ryots, although heavy in the

aggregate, were so trifling in individual cases, that the planters generally found that, independently of the trouble and vexation, they had to pay at least a shilling to recover threepence. It is a disgrace that such a state of affairs should exist in the oldest and wealthiest province of our Indian empire; and it is indispensable that a remedy should be immediately applied. We trust that in any official inquiry into the condition of the Bengalee ryots, their relations with the mahajuns, or native money-lenders, will not be overlooked. Every ryot must borrow before he can sow his crops; and it is on record that while the English planters, as a rule, make their advances without charging any interest, the native money-lenders invariably exact seventy-five per cent upon all their loans.

Having premised these things, let us now behold the Administrative System of British India,—the mighty fabric of power which we have reared upon the Indian plains, and which holds together an empire which extends everywhere from the Himálayas to the sea.

We have seen that prior to 1856 one-half of the net revenue of India was absorbed by its military establishments. A vast host of nearly 350,000 fighting men was maintained, to guard this empire of a hundred and fifty million souls from internal troubles or external attack. Of this force forty-four thousand were British troops, while the remainder were Sepoys or native troops. The main body of the army is always massed in, or ever ready to move towards, the Punjab and North-western Provinces, as this is the quarter where offensive or defensive movements will be most required. The British troops are the salt of our Indian army. They are to it what Alexander's serried Macedonians were to his more numerous array of spirited but unsteady Asiatics. The most overpowering odds or the most dreadful cannonade will hardly make British troops recoil. They may be excelled as regards flash and *élan*, but for solidity, bottom, and a courage that never wavers, they are incomparable. Hence their great value as a nucleus to an

Asiatic host, which is constitutionally liable to sudden panics. But drilled and led as it was by British officers, our Sepoy army was second only to the best European troops. Its composition was remarkable. Natives of all parts of India—of all tribes—of all castes, were to be found in its ranks. The races who had most stoutly opposed us—Rohillas, Rajpoots, Seikhs, Mahrattas—mustered most numerously under our banners. Indeed this was a part of our policy; and so, when an enemy was defeated, or a province annexed, the native troops, instead of being permitted to wander about in predatory bands, were furnished with congenial and well-paid employment in the service of the Company. But since the mutiny this system has been entirely changed. The Sepoy army, upon whose broad foundation the State formerly reposed, no longer exists under its old organisation, while the British troops have been doubled in number. Instead of 350,000 native soldiers, measures have been adopted which will before the expiry of this year reduce that force to 150,000 men, including about 7000 military police considered necessary for Lower Bengal. The military pyramid has been taken to pieces and rebuilt, and what was formerly its apex has become its base.

The sword and the pen together rule mankind. Along with the Army must go the Civil Service. This also constitutes a numerous body; and, like our old Sepoy army, its composition presents the spectacle of a large body of natives filling the lower posts and supplying the menial or mechanical agency, headed by a comparatively small number of Europeans. Before describing the Civil Service, we must explain the difference between the Regulation and non-Regulation provinces of our Indian empire. The former, consisting of our older territories, are governed by regularly enacted and published laws, commencing with the Cornwallis code. These provinces are administered exclusively by the Civil Service, and no exceptions can be made in revenue or judicial matters to the strict letter of the law.

The non-Regulation provinces are those acquired in more recent times (since the beginning of the century), to which the regular code has not been applied, and which are governed simply by instructions from the Governor-General. Officers of the Army, as well as members of the Civil Service, are eligible for administrative appointments in these latter territories (which include the Punjab, Scinde, Oude, &c.); and in these the spirit of the law is more regarded than the letter, so that exceptional cases are more easily met than in the Regulation provinces. We may also explain that of the two classes of which the Civil Service is composed—namely, the Covenanted and Uncovenanted—the former and much higher class are selected in the order of merit from the candidates who successfully pass the competitive examination annually held for this purpose in London; while the Uncovenanted members are appointed by the Government in India, and consist principally of natives, though containing also a considerable number of Europeans and half-castes.*

At the top of the pyramid of the Civil Service stands the Supreme Government, and the subordinate Governments of Madras and Bombay, with their respective councils, secretariats, boards, &c. Then come the collectors, judges, and magistrates of the various districts, with their "assistants"—all belonging to the covenanted or uncovenanted services; then deputy-magistrates and collectors, inferior judges, and Tehsildars, belonging to the uncovenanted class and chiefly natives. In the North-western Provinces, Madras, and Bombay, the offices of magistrate

* The Europeans in the Uncovenanted service are of two classes,—"either adventurers picked up in India, men who have gone out in some other calling, have acquired some experience in the country, and have eventually obtained Government employ; or of another class which has lately begun to seek for these highly respectable and well-paid appointments—viz., the sons of commissioned officers, who cannot obtain appointments in the Company's regular services. . . . The Native uncovenanted servants are principally drawn from the class of individuals or families attached to our service, and who have made it their profession from youth."—CAMPBELL'S *Modern India*, p. 290-91.

and collector are united in one person, who is of the same rank and pay as the judge—in north-western India, indeed, the former is the more important personage; but in Bengal, the magistrate and the collector are separate officers—the former being nearer to a police magistrate, and the latter to a mere revenue-receiver—while the judge is an officer of higher grade. Our Indian territories are divided into about 190 districts or prefectures. These districts vary much in size, but on the average comprise 3500 square miles and 550,000 souls each, with £100,000 of land-revenue. Each district has a magistrate and collector, who has under him a deputy and an assistant, both belonging to the covenanted service; and also two or three uncovenanted deputy-magistrates and collectors, whom he may employ in almost any duties. In Madras and Bombay, as the districts are generally larger, there is a larger staff. The judicial districts are not necessarily conterminous with those of the magistrate and collector, and there are, on the average, two judges to three revenue-districts. The covenanted service numbers rather more than 800 individuals; there are about 350 military officers employed in civil and political duties; and the uncovenanted service numbers about 1850 (drawing salaries of from £100 to £800 and even £1200). This gives a total of 3000 persons, of whom more than a half are natives, employed in the civil administration of the country. Lastly comes the class of inferior and ministerial servants, whose number must be immense. Each district-magistrate's office has about forty of these employés attached to it, and so has each judge's office; then in each district there are, on the average, ten or twelve revenue-divisions, each with an establishment of twenty or thirty persons,—and also from ten to thirty police-divisions, each having from a dozen to fifty policemen, besides smaller posts. In all, about 100,000 inferior servants; with the Civil Service, 3000 in number, forming the upper crust.

The host of young men whom the British Isles annually

send forth to recruit these vast Indian establishments used to owe their appointments to the favour of the Court of Directors; but the patronage system has been abolished, and a system of competitive public examinations instituted in its stead. The examination system is still in its infancy, and we shall not over-sanguinely predicate its success. It will suffice to exclude incapables,—it will prevent the admission of that class which used to go by the name of "the Company's bad bargains;" and by so doing it will insure a respectable mediocrity. But the probability is that it will exclude not a few young men who in after life would have proved among the best upholders of our Indian empire. Different temperaments, like different kinds of trees, have different times for development. Many first-class natures are slow of growth. And if we do not take care, our examination systems will draft into the Indian service far too many fast-sprouting larches and poplars, while tending to exclude the slow-growing elms and oaks, which furnish the best pillars of the State. One unequivocally good alteration has recently been made in the military service of India, by the abolition of the system of promotion by seniority in the upper commands in the army. Thus the Executive is no longer necessitated to appoint to active and critical commands officers of infirm health or little capacity, merely because length of days has placed them first on the list. It was a reform much needed, and which cannot fail to have the happiest effects on the efficiency of the Indian army.

Having thus surveyed the administrative machinery of British India, the question next arises, What has been done by us for the social and moral condition of the people? Our revenue-system, while benefiting ourselves, has greatly benefited our Indian subjects, compared with the tyranny and corruption of the native princes; but many social benefits and triumphs of civilisation have been accomplished by the Company and its officers, at no little expense to the former, and personal risk and hardship to the latter, the history of which, as recorded in

the graphic pages of Mr Kaye's work, the world will not willingly let die.

No people in the world exhibit so many exceptional developments of human nature as the races of India. The most impressible of races, ideas and views of life take root amongst them such as would find no acceptance elsewhere. Supple and pliant in their bodily frame, they are equally so in their mental and moral constitution; and upon no other race has the force of circumstances, or the contagion of example, so potent an influence in determining them towards good or evil. "We had been nearly two centuries connected with them," says Mr Kaye, "by ties at least of commerce, before we knew very much more about the natives of India than that they were a race of black people, with bare legs, carrying the greater amount of their apparel piled up on the top of their heads." And when at length the scales fell from our eyes, no little astonishment awaited us. The awakening hardly dates farther back than a quarter of a century ago. It was the revelation of the hideous crime of Thuggee that first fairly let in the light upon us. In 1810, we find an order issued by the commander-in-chief, cautioning the Sepoys about to proceed on leave to their homes, against "a description of murderers denominated Thugs;" but it was not until twenty years afterwards that the secrets of the horrible fraternity became known, and active measures were adopted for its suppression. Then it was that the startling fact flashed upon the Indian Government, that there was a regular class of its subjects to whom murder was a profession, and not only a profession, but also a religion; and that a great brotherhood of crime, having taken a sacrament with all possible solemnity, went about the country murdering in cold-bloodless style, by strangling in remote places unwary travellers whom they could seduce into their toils. All this was done with the most consummate art and profound secrecy; the members assumed disguises, and played parts, with the greatest address; they had also a secret dialect of their own, and secret

signs by which they silently communicated with each other. These gangs had no permanent form; the members assembled for a murdering expedition, and dispersed, vanished, when it was over. They belonged, for the most part, to particular villages, where they left their wives and children; and they outwardly followed some peaceful calling. The real cause of their occasional absences was often a matter of open notoriety; but they did not murder their neighbours,—indeed, the village benefited by the blood-money that was brought home; the Zemindar, or headman, was paid a tribute or hush-money, and the police officials were likewise bribed into silence. "I and my fathers have been Thugs for twenty generations," said one of these professional stranglers; and they even believed that their patron goddess Davee had sent judgments and death upon all the native princes who had persecuted them. But in the Company they encountered a more redoubtable foe. Captured Thugs were got to turn approvers; the whole secrets of the craft were divulged; the laws were relaxed so as to meet the difficulties of the case; the gangs were hunted down in all directions; our jails were filled with Thugs; and a great and horrid institution which had existed for centuries was broken up in a few years. Davee was vanquished. "The Company's good fortune is such," said the discomfited murderers, "that before the sound of your drums, sorcerers, witches, and demons take flight; and how can Thuggee stand?" An occasional traveller may still at intervals be strangled by the wayside; but the system is destroyed—the profession ruined—the guild scattered, never again to be associated into a great corporate body.

Another crime peculiar to India, though less so than Thuggee, was Dakoitee, or systematic gang-robbery. The externals of this crime early forced themselves upon the notice of our Indian administrators, but it was not till recently discovered that Dakoitee was the normal condition of whole tribes born and bred to the profession,—that there were robber-castes in

India just as there were soldier-castes or writer-castes, and that men went out to prey upon the property of their fellows—and, if need be, on their lives—with strict religious observance of sacrament and sacrifice. Not that all Dakoitee was of this hereditary character: there were also lay members, as it were, of the profession, who troubled themselves little about presiding goddesses, and set about their work in a less scientific style; but these all rallied round men of the hereditary castes as leaders, and believed they could accomplish little without their agency. Like the Thugs, the Dakoits all have settled abodes, and ostensibly follow a peaceful calling, although the object of their frequent journeys is no secret to the rest of the villagers. Indeed, the headman of the village and the police share the spoil with the successful robbers; and the former even supplies them with food and clothing in time of need, and makes moneyed advances to them. It was not till 1843 that special and vigorous measures were taken for the suppression of this widespread evil. Colonel Sleeman, who had succeeded so well against the Thugs, was appointed to the task, and accomplished a great deal of good. He and his associates struck at the robber-castes, which are now wellnigh extinguished. The hereditary feature peculiar to India has been destroyed, but Dakoitee, or ordinary gang-robbery, is not suppressed. In Bengal, as we have said, the crime has appeared in great virulence; and probably nothing will suffice to put an end to it as long as the condition of the peasantry in certain districts is not improved.

The history of British conquest in the East has certainly a bright side. In its chapters will be found recorded the exploits of men striving and toiling under the fiery skies of the tropics, and sacrificing often life itself in their efforts to elevate the social condition of the people by whom they were surrounded. Look, for instance, at the romantic tale of the civilisation of Mairwara. Thirty-five years ago we found there, in the very heart of India, a race of savage marauders—many of them fugi-

tives from other states, men whom society had spewed out—with little or no regard for human life or liberty, practising infanticide, selling their mothers, and committing every kind of atrocity without shame or remorse. In 1821 we subjugated the country of these freebooters; and as early as 1827 Captain Hall, the excellent officer to whom the work of improvement was confided, was able to report "the complete and voluntary abolition of the two revolting customs, female infanticide and the sale of women;" while the re-marriage of widows was provided for, and the worst forms of slavery abolished. In 1835 Captain Dixon succeeded to the charge of the district, and under him the work of civilisation went on with a success that has left nothing to be desired. And by what measures have those savage tribes been reclaimed? In Mairwara, as elsewhere, the Indian Government made the rude barbarians the agents of their own civilisation. First Hall and then Dixon went amongst them without any European assistance,—a local battalion was raised from the people themselves, at once furnishing support for the authorities, and reducing to discipline and giving employment to men to whom war had become a habit. But the plough was the chief civiliser. Tanks were dug, wells were sunk, the jungle was cleared, and a regular supply of water was secured to the fields. Even a city (Nyanuggar) rose at Dixon's bidding with the rapidity of magic. In there months from the laying of the first stone, its spacious bazaar was opened for traffic; and in a short time two thousand families had flocked in from the trading towns of the adjoining provinces, and engaged in those manufacturing and commercial operations which were wanting to complete the wellbeing of Mairwara.

The civilisation of the Bheel tribes is another work worthy of lasting commemoration. Candeish, in western India, was the scene of this achievement. The Bheel tribes constituted about an eighth of the population. When the country was in a settled and flourishing state, these people had been principally employed

as village watchmen—a class nowhere in India of unexceptionable character. Even at their best they appear to have been a lawless and unscrupulous people; but when the convulsions and misery of the country began, they formed themselves into robber-gangs, and became the Ishmaelites of that part of the world. At times massacred by hundreds, at times triumphing over the Guicowar's troops sent against them—reckless and migratory, passing from place to place, throwing up a cluster of rude huts in the course of a few hours, and delighting not in more permanent habitations—they would stream down from their mountain-homes, sacking and firing the villages in the plains, driving off the cattle, and securing the "headmen" for the sake of the ransoms they would fetch; so they existed. It is not surprising, therefore, that when the country first passed into our hands, not a few measures for the reclamation of these tribes were tried without success. It was reserved for James Outram—an officer who has since won for himself one of the most distinguished reputations in India, and who is now doing for Oude what Thomason has done for the North-west Provinces, and Lawrence for the Punjab—then a lieutenant in the Bombay Native Infantry, to give successful effect to the philanthropic measures of the Government. Under his able management, a local battalion, the Bheel corps, long despaired of as impracticable, at length began to take form. Outram brought his wild recruits into familiar contact with the high-caste Sepoys of his own regiment, and the conciliatory manners of the old soldiers went far to rivet the confidence which the bold frank manner of their young leader had already engendered. The work of civilisation then went on rapidly. A careful surveillance of the people, preservation of the peace, and administration of justice, were inaugurated; their old profession of village watchmen was opened to the Bheels, and liberal encouragement was given to them to settle and devote themselves to agricultural pursuits. So great was the success which attended these efforts, that in 1843 it was officially

reported that "the districts formerly the scene of every outrage, where neither life nor property was secure, now enjoyed tranquillity; the roads formerly hazardous for the armed party, were traversed at all hours by single passengers; the formidable list of crimes had dwindled down to a few paltry thefts; and the Bheels, from outcasts, had become members of society, daily rising in respectability and appearance, and becoming useful and obedient servants of the State." Since then education has been made to lend its aid in the work of improvement. The schoolmaster has taken the young Bheel in hand, and has brought him within the pale of civilised life; and there is now no fear of a relapse.

Such is the beneficent work of reclamation which the Indian Government pursues in the more barbarous districts submitted to its sway. It remains for us to notice briefly some cruel and horrible customs and rites prevalent among the natives of India, which our Government has succeeded in either wholly or partially suppressing.

India is the great land of inconsistencies. Nowhere, among certain classes of the population, is life, in all its manifestations, more venerated and cared for; yet nowhere, in the mass, is it less regarded,—and that not from any sanguinary disposition, but simply from an indifference to its value. Suttee, or widow-burning, is one of those cruel rites of which we need not speak, —the subject being so familiar to the British public. Yet what a striking spectacle was it—how indicative of the strange people we had found in India, and of the gulf that separated our sympathies from theirs—to see "a young woman—one, in our eyes, perhaps little more than a child—ascend with heavenly composure the funeral pile of her husband, and with an unaltered countenance resign herself to a cruel death. You saw her calmly and gracefully performing the last offices due to the dead, and the last courtesies to the living; serenely decorating her person as for a bridal, and in an unbroken voice repeating the formulas of prayer dictated by the unpitying priests; then

walking with steady tread round the pyre, mounting it without a shudder of fear, and perishing without a murmur." * The belief was that the spirits of those heroines, thus purged from sin, ceased from their transmigrations, and rejoined their husbands in Paradise without further probation. The practice of Suttee was never universal throughout India: it prevailed most in Bengal and Hindostan Proper, yet even there was not general. The Court of Directors, as usual, were foremost in desiring the suppression of this horrible rite,—the Indian Government hesitating for some time to interfere so greatly with the religious ideas of the natives. Thus supported at home, however, Lord William Bentinck, with high moral courage, issued a decree which banished the rite from the British territories; and such, since then, has been the zeal and tact of Colonel Ludlow and other of our officers at the native Courts, that an instance of Suttee is now almost unknown. A further important step in the same direction has been taken. The marriage of widows was illegal in India, but most wisely and humanely an act of the Legislative Council has removed the restriction. The more formidable barrier of prejudice remains to be surmounted; but even this begins to give way, and the name of Baboo Boobun Mohun Doss, who first set superstition and prejudice at defiance by marrying a young widow of fifteen, deserves to be placed on record.

The Meriah sacrifice—the immolation of a human being to propitiate the Earth-Goddess—was another startling rite which met us in India. But, unlike Suttee, it was a rite foreign to the true Hindoos and the tribes professing the Brahminical faith, and was restricted to certain half-savage tribes in the mountainous recesses of the interior, remnants of a wave of quasi-aboriginal population that had spread over the land before the Hindoos rose to supremacy. It was amidst the pestilential jungles on the Orissa hills that we first came face to face with the Khonds. For nearly a century we and they had dwelt within

* Kaye, p. 524.

a short distance of each other, without the least contact or mutual knowledge. In 1835, however, the British troops occupied Goomsar, and after a brief but spirited struggle, the Khond tribes of the hills were subjugated. Then it was that Lieutenant Macpherson, when employed in the work of surveying at the foot of the hills, was struck with the strange religious and social life of these wild tribes, and, at the very outset, stumbled upon the painful fact that the tribes were in the habit of offering up to their deities human beings purchased or bred for the purpose! The Khonds believe that the Supreme Being, or God of Light, the source of all good, created for himself a consort, the Earth-Goddess, who, rebelling against him, became the source of all evil. Having this much in common, the Khonds thereafter diverge into two great sects,—one of which believes that the God of Light utterly overcame the Earth-Goddess, and has since held her in thrall, employing her as the agent of his will; whereas the other holds that the Earth-Goddess is still unconquered, and that whatever of happiness is vouchsafed to man, is only by the dispensation of blessings in her own gift, or by the withdrawal of that antagonism which could prevent their emanation from the God of Light. It was among this latter sect that the Meriah sacrifice prevailed, as the only means of propitiating the evil goddess. The victims "were furnished by a regular class of procurers, who either supplied them to order, or raised them on speculation. They were bought, perhaps, from their parents in hard famine-times, or they were kidnapped on the plains; or were, perhaps, the children of the procurers themselves. Devoted often in their childhood to the Earth-Goddess, they were suffered to grow up as consecrated privileged beings, to marry wives, to hold lands, and flocks and herds, and other worldly goods,—cherished and endowed by the community for whom they were to die, and, in spite of the tremendous doom that overshadowed them, leading happy lives to the last."* The means of reclamation employed by the Indian

* KAYE, p. 498-9.

Government, and the difficulties encountered by its officers, were the same as those which we have already described in the case of the Mairs and the Bheels. And the success of Macpherson was no less gratifying and remarkable than that of Dixon and Outram. Providence helped the good work, and two unusually good seasons and rich harvests followed the first trembling renunciation of their bloody rite by the sacrificing sect of Khonds. The neighbouring Boad tribes, who likewise practised the sacrifice, viewed the result with wondering admiration. They called us "Boora Pennu's people"—agents of the God of Light; and the result was that in a short time, throughout all the Orissa hills, the Meriah sacrifice was abandoned, and the omnipotence of Tari Pennu, the evil Earth-Goddess, sank down into a delusion and a sham.

Among those hill-tribes of Orissa we came in contact also with the practice of Female Infanticide,—another vicious peculiarity of Indian society which the British Government has succeeded in suppressing. Female Infanticide is a practice not confined to India: it prevails to a very considerable extent amongst the dense population of China; and in every country the general crime of infanticide exists as an occasional consequence of illicit love. But in China it is acknowledged to be a crime, and in other countries is punished as such; whereas in India it is regarded as an allowable and even commendable practice. Here again we find a striking anomaly in Hindoo character. The parental instinct is as strong in the people of India as in any people in the world; and even where no parental tie exists, the tenderness with which strong bearded men devote themselves to the care of young children is as touching as it is remarkable. A childless woman, too, is a miserable woman,—a hissing and a reproach; and she can only account for so great an affliction by fancying it sent upon her for some grievous sin committed in a pre-existent state. Nevertheless, in some parts of India female infanticide has for generations been a *custom*. The fact is the more remarkable, inasmuch as the Hindoo cha-

racter represents the emotional rather than the calculating utilitarian side of humanity; and yet, as by a fatality, we find both the emotional and the rationalistic principles producing in this case a similar result. For, in truth, female infanticide is practised by two very different classes, and from two dissimilar sets of motives, in India. In China, in Europe, and in certain parts of India, it is among the lowest classes that infanticide prevails, as a relief from future burdens for which they deem themselves unequal. In Hindostan Proper, on the contrary, the practice is peculiar to the higher orders, and especially the Rajpoots. Among these, the circle within which marriages must be contracted is narrowed by the exclusiveness of caste, and marriage itself is an expensive thing from the costly usages with which it is attended. Yet in India, celibacy is disgraceful,—an unmarried daughter is a reproach alike to her parents and to herself. Moreover, the Rajpoot assumes that unchastity is the necessary condition of unmarried life; and to preserve the purity of his daughters and the honour of his house, he "cleared away" his female children a few hours after their birth. When a messenger from the zenana announced to him the birth of a daughter, the Rajpoot chief would coolly roll up between his fingers a tiny opium ball, to be conveyed to the mother, who thereupon rubbed on her nipple the sleepy poison, and the babe drank in death with its mother's milk. In a country where polygamy is common and concubinage not dishonourable, and where an unconnected man is rarely to be found, a widely-diffused system of female infanticide would be an impossibility. But in the localities and amongst the tribes to which the practice was confined, the sacrifice of life was terrible, and whole villages might be seen without a female child! To uproot this cruel practice was the most difficult task ever undertaken by our Indian Government. The evil existed alike in Central and Western India, among the high-caste Rajpoots and among the savage Mairs and Khonds and Boads; and the undemonstrative nature of the crime, as well as the inviolable privacy which screens

female life in India, presented obstacles all but insuperable to its suppression. Moreover, as the practice was most prevalent in native States not subject to our rule, the greater part of the philanthropic work of suppression had to be accomplished by the tact and persuasion of our officers, rather than by the exercise of direct power. But there were men equal to the task; in due time success crowned our efforts; and the names of Sutherland, Ludlow, Thoresby, Willoughby, and others, will long be held in grateful memory, as the zealous and able agents by which female infanticide has been terminated, and a new and happier regime inaugurated for the females of India, whether married or unmarried.

In all its efforts for the moral and social improvement of the people, the Indian Government has proceeded on the principle that you cannot suppress a widespread vice without clearing away the circumstances which give it birth. If you would clear a field of weeds, you must, while uprooting them, put the soil in a position to grow something better. This principle was followed with the Bheels, and Mairs, and Khonds, and other wild tribes, of which we have been speaking. A similar course is now being tried upon the population at large by means of Education. It was in 1813 that the first movement by the Government took place in this direction; and, in the Charter Act of that year, it was provided that a lakh of rupees (£10,000) should be annually "applied to the revival and improvement of literature, and the encouragement of the learned natives of India, and for the introduction and promotion of the sciences among the inhabitants of the British territories in India." But it was not until 1823 that anything was actually done, and then not in the right direction. Down to 1835, all the larger educational establishments supported by the Government, with the exception of the Hindoo College of Calcutta, were decidedly Oriental—too Oriental—in their character; and the whole scope of the instruction tended to conciliate old prejudices and to propagate old ideas. The result was a dreary failure. But

the Court of Directors were resolved to succeed, and their letters on the subject were singularly unreserved in expression, as well as enlightened in spirit. Frankly admitting that our assumption of the administration of India had so far been detrimental to the higher classes of the natives, in that it had deprived them of official employment, the Court urged that it was therefore our duty to afford them the best equivalent in our power, and that nothing better could be offered than such sound European instruction as would gradually qualify them for restoration to much of the official employment of which they had been deprived. These wise counsels were given effect to in 1835, by Lord W. Bentinck, in a minute which gave a deathblow to the Oriental system, by directing that all the educational funds "be henceforth employed in imparting to the native population a knowledge of English literature and science through the medium of the English language." Notwithstanding these sweeping expressions, indigenous education was fortunately not neglected; and shortly afterwards it was directed that in all the Government colleges and schools the cultivation of the vernacular should go hand in hand with that of the English language—thus rearing an improved race of native schoolmasters, who, while teaching the vernacular, might quicken the quiet depths of the provinces with a little of the leaven of European knowledge. One great and avowed motive to these educational measures was the desire on the part of the Indian Government to have at their disposal a body of natives qualified by their habits and acquirements to take a larger share, and occupy higher situations, in civil administration than had hitherto been the practice. But hereupon the natives, ever prone to lean with childlike helplessness on the strong arm of Government, thought that they saw something absolute (instead of merely conditional) in the promises of Government, and believed that they had only to conform to a certain test to secure official employment. This dangerous delusion is being checked. The students have been wisely cautioned not to

imagine that the sole or main use of a liberal education is to fit them for the offices of Government,—and reminded that, besides the public service and the pursuits of literature and science, there are open to them the learned professions—law, medicine, the office of teacher, and civil engineering. Medical colleges have been established for some time; but the teaching of Civil Engineering is now deservedly obtaining still more marked support from the Government,—the object of these latter colleges being to instruct and train natives for every kind of work required in the service of the Government in its department of Public Works. Finally, crowning and eclipsing all that had gone before, on the 19th July 1854 there went forth from the Court of Directors the great Education Despatch, containing a scheme of education for all India,—"far wider and more comprehensive," says Lord Dalhousie, "than any the local or the Supreme Governments could ever have ventured to suggest. It left nothing to be desired, if indeed it did not authorise and direct that more should be done than is within our present grasp." The main features of this great plan are the establishment of vernacular schools throughout the districts, with Government colleges of a higher grade, and a university in each of the three Presidencies; while grants-in-aid to all educational institutions are sanctioned, subject to certain rules, and on the condition of Government inspection being at all times fully admitted.

To complete our sketch of the present condition of the Indian Empire, it remains to note what has been done for the material improvement of the country. It is somewhat curious that efforts for the moral and social elevation of the people took a definite shape before the development of the material resources of the country was equally visibly attended to. Indeed, although the mere extension of British rule in India brought with it a great increase to the wellbeing of the people, it was not till Lord Dalhousie assumed the reins of government that the execution of great public works for improving the

country fairly commenced. Highways and waterways were the great wants of India, and it is in the construction of these that we have raised the most enduring and not least beneficial monuments of our power.

Roads are the great highways of conquest and commerce. Arms and civilisation alike flow along them, and in their train come the blessings of settled government, the inroad of new ideas, and the development of old but neglected resources. Wherever the Romans went, they made roads—roads of an iron substantiality like their makers, fragments of which have long survived the decay of imperial Rome herself. It was a noble thought, and nobly executed. How those old magnificent *Viæ* went shooting out from the Eternal City, straight as the track of arrows, radiating like civilising rays out to the wide circumference of the Roman power,—lines of light spreading farther and farther into the realms of barbarism, growing thinner and thinner, feebler and feebler, till they disappear in the savage night that hung like a thick curtain around the *orbis veteribus notus*, and formed the true frontiers of the sunny empire of Rome. The British race are the Romans of the modern world. True heirs of the old *Domini rerum*, they do not blend with or accommodate themselves to the ideas and fashions of other peoples; they go forth dominating and civilising, yet in their dealings with others, ever tending to a policy not unaptly expressed by the American phrase, "improving off the face of the earth." Other peoples must come into our ways, not we into theirs. Had the French held our place in India, they would have fraternised better than we with the natives, but they would have become Hindooised. Indian blood would by this time have flowed in half their veins, Indian habits and ideas would have more than half displaced those of Europe. They would have ruled less, and blended more, than the strong stiff-jointed Briton. In that land of caste and invasions they would have formed the uppermost and last-come caste, rather than a distinct race of foreign rulers.

Take John Bull with all his faults, it must be allowed that he knows how to rule. He may not be great in theories of government, but he is born for the work of ruling, and does it by instinct. Proud yet self-depreciating, he is ever ready to grumble at his own mistakes; but what he can do is already written in enduring characters upon the face of the globe. North America, Australia, India, are the signets of his greatness in that most lordly of qualities, the art of ruling men and founding empires. Yes! critics there are by the hundred, complaints there are by the thousand, of our Indian Government—and in so immensely wide a field we shall not say that all those complaints are groundless,—but take that empire all in all, and we will not find the like of it in the world.

Of all the works of public improvement which can be applied to an Indian province, works of irrigation are the happiest in their effects upon the physical condition of the people. The roads for water often transcend in value those for camels and caravans. Water is the prime necessity of Eastern life. In our northern climes water is only too abundant, and we shrink before the ever-recurrent mists and rain-clouds which beset our skies. As a general rule, our farmers dread the rain and implore the sun; and the greatest improvement in our agriculture has been the invention of a system of draining, by which our sluggish soils may be freed from their excessive moisture. The reverse of all this prevails in the East. There, there is ever sun enough, and a cry for rain is the most frequent prayer of the ryots; while the grand desideratum of Indian cultivation is the formation of wells, tanks, and irrigating canals, to drench the soil into exuberant fertility. Give but water, and the veriest waste places of India will bloom like a garden, and the common soil will wave with double or treble harvests in the year.

This truth was brought home to us all, in a manner as painful as it was striking, by the incidents of the famine which prevailed last year in Upper India. A famine in the East is

a more appalling calamity than even our terrible experience of the famine in Ireland in 1847 enables us to realise. In that case England, with her unparalleled wealth and ready charity, was close to the suffering country, and the means of communication were the best in the world; nevertheless thousands perished in that Irish famine, and whole parishes became solitudes under the exodus of the hundreds of thousands who in starving gangs thronged the roads and crowded the piers to escape from the famine-stricken island. The peasantry of India at times experience a similar calamity under circumstances of much greater hopelessness; for in their case there is no great reserve of wealth ready to launch its bounty in their behalf.

The seat of the famine extended from Agra to the Sutlej: the worst part was to the north-west of Delhi, on the plains of Sirhind, which form the arid watershed between the rivers of Bengal and those of the Punjab. Even in ordinary seasons there is a great diversity in the appearance of the various regions of Northern India. To the north-east of the Ganges, from the lower slopes of the Himalayas to the sacred stream, abundance in the most attractive forms of beauty everywhere prevails. Primeval forests, the haunts of the tiger and the elephant; luxurious vegetation, approaching even to rankness; the greenest fields, with sparkling streams and brooks; tanks and reservoirs without number; the noblest of mango-groves, as umbrageous as they are beautiful; prosperous contented villages, of bamboo matting and thatch, in the midst of bamboo plantations, with every roof covered with the finest melons,—such everywhere is the aspect of the country, which, with every variety of scene, advances in a long undulating swell towards the plains of the West. But no sooner do we cross the Ganges and enter the Doab than the character of the country is changed. We are now upon broad, level, arid, ploughed-up plains, over which it is possible to ride any distance without meeting a fence, or any obstacle whatever except a dry nullah or a blind well. Few trees are to be seen, and it is at once

observable that the soil is less fertile than that on the left bank of the Ganges, and that it produces what it bears by dint of greater toil. Again, still further to the westward, on the other side of the Jumna, the country becomes less and less fertile—a stony bed, covered with a few inches of soil, where irrigation, but for vegetation, would entirely disappear, until at length the ungrateful plain merges into the Sandy Desert beyond Ajmere. It was in these western districts, accordingly, that the famine most prevailed.

It was strange to listen, at that time, to the universal lament that the weather was so fine. In the hills, the lower ridges of the Himalayas, where the weather is to a great extent an index of that on the plains, they cried for more snow, and lamented that winter was giving place to the warmth of an early spring. "We have been in hopes here of more snow, but, alas! not a sign is there of another fall!" said a letter from Mussoorie. "The winter appears to have fled," was the lament from Simla: "no more clouds, no more immediate prospect of snow or rain. The days are very warm,—the leaf-buds are already bursting their winter covering—in fact, an early spring is coming on apace. . . . The aspect of the country to the south and east still continues to resemble a desert." From Cawnpore we read,—"The change of the moon has taken place, but, alas! not the sign of a cloud is there to be seen in the azure heavens." "We wish it would rain!" was the cry from Patna: "clouds are to be seen every morning, but they only tantalise us; before evening, all is as dry and dusty as ever."

In ordinary seasons the immense table-land of Central India in the month of April presents a scene which can be met with elsewhere only in the corn-producing districts of Russia or America. Its vast undulating plains are covered with cereal crops, stretching further than the eye can reach; and the traveller, journeying along for days at the ordinary stages, fancies he will never get through the interminable sea of grain. Vegetation is everywhere most luxuriant, and the fruits of

the earth spring up as if they were forced by some irresistible power from below. It is only necessary to scratch the seed into the earth to ensure, with the aid of sufficient moisture, a certain and speedy yield; thereafter, all that is required is to watch the crops, when the grain is in the ear, against the greedy attacks of the birds of the air. But all this fertility is dependent upon water; and HE who sendeth the early and the latter rains withheld His usual bounty. The skies were as brass, and the earth as iron,—and the wail of the famine went up from the parched land. "The distress round about here," said a letter from Nusseerabad, "is truly most awful. Those who have the means of migrating are all doing so from their famine-cursed country. Our troops on the line of march have passed many camps of these unfortunate refugees from hunger. Everywhere was exhibited the tragedy of the deserted village. The aged and infirm could hardly be said to be tenants where the jackal and dog held undisputed sway. Human beings were seen grubbing up the ant-hills, and robbing the occupants of their tiny hoards of precious grains of precious corn." Hansi and Hissar, two of the places most conspicuous for the brutalities perpetrated at the outset of the Sepoy revolt, by a merited retribution, suffered the worst horrors of the famine. From Rajpore, we were told, "an exodus is taking place daily;" and from the Dehra Doon "numbers of men, women, and children are on their way into Oude." The horrors endured in the open plains, far distant from help—in the little hamlets where the wells failed, and the aged and infirm resigned themselves passively to death—may be conjectured, but for the most part they escaped observation. It was only at the outskirts of the misery—near the great towns and military stations—that the incidents of woe came under the European eye. Agra was not in the worst part of the dearth, yet a resident there said: "Numbers of people on their way to this and other stations where relief is procurable, in the shape of food or wages for labour, perish from want and weakness.

Some get as far as this and fall, just as they reach the place which they have been fondly looking to as the goal where their sufferings are to end. A family consisting of father, mother, and three children, were found in the road near the Fort. The father, mother, and two of the children were dead, —the remaining child, still living, was clinging to its dead mother's breast in the vain hope of obtaining sustenance." In these circumstances, many impoverished and starving parents were anxious to give away or sell their children to save their lives: just as occurred in the famine of 1837, when the colony of Secundra was formed of the children thus given away by their parents, and who were reared as Christians by their kind English protectors.

We have described this famine, because it is typical of many others which have occurred in India, and because it serves to bring into prominent notice the chief material wants of our Eastern Empire. India is so vast a region, and its various provinces are so differently circumstanced in regard to climate and geographical condition, that drought and dearth are never more than local. All that is needed, therefore, to remedy the effects of a famine, is (1) irrigation-canals, to render the land less dependent upon the rains, and (2) railways and roads to transport the abundance of one province to supply the deficiencies of others. But since prevention is better than cure, canals must, from this point of view, take precedence even of roads. And in the making of canals we have certainly done wonders, although much still remains to be done.

Grandest of all our works of irrigation in India is the Ganges Canal,—a work without its parallel in the world. Major Cautley (since knighted for his services) was the engineer of this great work; and under his superintendence, within eight years the whole main lines of the canal, applicable to the double purpose of irrigation and navigation, were designed, executed, and opened. Extending over 525 miles in length, measuring in its greatest depth 10 feet, and in its extreme breadth 170

feet, the main irrigation of the Ganges Canal is a work which stands unequalled in its class and character among the efforts of civilised nations. Its length is five-fold greater than that of all the main lines in Lombardy united, and more than twice the length of the aggregate irrigation lines of Lombardy and Egypt together. As a single work of navigation for purposes of commerce, the Ganges has no competitor throughout the world, except the Imperial Canal of China. No single canal in Europe has attained to half the magnitude of this Indian work. It nearly equals the aggregate length of the four greatest canals in France; it greatly exceeds all the first-class canals of Holland put together; and it is greater by nearly one-third than the greatest navigation-canal in the United States of America. This refers to the main line alone. Taking into account the branches, the canal will extend to about 900 miles in length; and the area which may be irrigated by its waters will not be less than a million and a half of acres. It is impossible to estimate in their full extent the blessings which its fertilising influence will confer upon millions, whom it has now placed beyond the reach of those periodical calamities of season which from time to time, as in 1837, have brought upon the plains of Hindostan the widespread desolation of famine and death. The canal leaves the bed of the Ganges at Hurdwar, close to the foot of the Himalayas, and traverses the whole length of the Doab, passing in its course by Futteghur and Cawnpore. It was opened by Lord Dalhousie in person on the 8th April 1854. And well worthy was the scene of the picturesque lines with which the Anglo-Indian muse hailed the birth of this new river-offspring of the mighty Himalayas:—

"O ancient peaks
Cold-glancing in the early sun!
This crowd in every murmur speaks
Your glory. Now is done
Your lonely age; your true life is begun,—
Barren no more! . . .

And years to come shall hear your praise
Far other than the fame of demon-gods,
Holding their grim abodes
On Meru's top through fabled secular days.
Years hence some aged man will say—
Of those who stand to-day
By the glad baptism of your youngest-born,—
When, from his fruit-grove, far around
He eyes the green and affluent ground:
'I stood among them on that shining morn,—
I saw the Ruler of the Land
Let loose the waters with an easy hand:
The River, vainly idolised of yore,
Now first her servants blessed;
The white-topp'd mountains never bore
Us benefit before,
Till taught by those wise strangers from the West!'" *

More than any other province, the Punjab has shared largely in the benefits of those works of irrigation; and, if we except the district of Sirhind, no other part of India stands more in need of such works. In superficial area the Punjab is a vast triangle, 300 miles in greatest breadth and 350 in greatest length, with its base resting on the Himalayas, and its apex pointing southwards to the spot where the Five Rivers mingle their waters, to roll down in one mighty flood to the Indian Ocean. The face of the level region intersected by these five rivers presents every variety of aspect, from the most luxuriant cultivation to sandy deserts and the wildest prairies of grass and brushwood. A traveller passing along the highway which traverses the northern tracts, would imagine the Punjab to be the garden of India; again returning by the road which intersects the central districts, he would suppose it to be a country little better than a wilderness. All along the base of the lower Himalayan range, there stretches a strip of country from fifty to eighty miles broad, watered by the mountain rivulets, which in their downward course spread fruitfulness and wealth on either side,—enriching with allu-

* *Ex Eremo.* By H. G. KEENE.

vial deposits their banks, which are fringed with the finest cultivation, and exhibit a luxuriant fertility unsurpassed in Northern India. These level tracts, though unadorned with trees and unrelieved by any picturesque features, are studded with well-peopled villages, are covered with two waving harvests in the year, and are the home of a sturdy, industrious, and skilful peasantry. Within this zone of perennial verdure, which forms the northern border-land of the Punjab, are situated most of the chief cities, including the sister capitals of Umritsur and Lahore. But the scene changes as we proceed southwards. Along the banks of the five great rivers, indeed, fertility continues, but it is confined to their immediate margins; and in the centre of all the Doabs (as the interfluvial regions are called) nothing meets the eye but interminable wastes, overgrown with grass and brushwood, scantily threaded by sheep-tracks and the footprints of cattle. Here and there a hamlet stands alone in the wilderness, tenanted by a semi-barbarous population, the very aborigines of the land—lawless pastoral tribes who collect herds of cattle stolen from the agricultural districts. This, in truth, is the great grazing district of Northern India. It yields an inexhaustible supply of grass for all equestrian establishments; and its boundless grazing-grounds sustain a noble breed of cattle, buffaloes, sheep, and goats. Vast herds of camels, too, which sustain the trade of the country, and mainly carry on the traffic with Cabul, are at certain seasons turned loose into these wastes, to browse on the leaves of the densely-growing trees and brushwood; and from the owners of those, and the other kinds of grazing-stock, a grazing-tax is levied by the Government in return for the right of pasturage. These wastes are likewise serviceable as natural depôts of firewood The Punjab is unfortunately bare of trees,—with the bright exception of the province of Mooltan, where the date and palm trees cluster in dense groves, or extend for miles in stately avenues. Timber, accordingly, is almost unprocurable; and even wood for fuel, so

indispensable in a coalless country, could not be had but for the masses of brushwood which have overgrown the central wastes of the Doabs.

Such is the scene of sterility which overspreads the central parts of all the Doabs; but amidst those scenes of desolation the stranger is astonished to observe that wherever a hamlet or homestead is to be seen, it is sure to be surrounded by patches of good cultivation. Barren as it seems, the soil is rich, and repays irrigation,—even though the wells there must be sunk deep before water is procurable. Still more striking and constantly recurring tokens show that, despite appearances, this region was once not inferior to more favoured districts. Everywhere in these wastes are to be seen ruined cities, villages, temples, tanks, wells, and water-courses! Times of anarchy and violence, doubtless, caused those tanks and water-courses to be neglected; and with their decay the land grew barren, and the cities were forsaken. Yet give but water again, and the olden prosperity will in time revive, and population grow dense in these now solitary places. To achieve this beneficent and wise project, in the region lying between the Ravee river on one side and the Sutlej and its tributary the Beas on the other, was the purpose of the Baree Doab Canal, the execution of which work has been most successfully carried on, and which is reckoned "equal, if not superior, to the finest irrigation canals in Europe." The main line, with its branches, extends over about 470 miles. Its stream is at its head 120 feet in breadth, and $5\frac{1}{2}$ feet in depth, diminishing at its lower end to 16 feet in breadth and $2\frac{1}{2}$ in depth. Even during the dry season of the year, the canal-head rolls down a volume of water amounting to not less than 3000 cubic feet in each second; and a slight modification of the main channel, which is provided for, admits an additional 1000 cubic feet, procurable during nine months of the year. The canal, likewise, is so constructed as to serve the purposes of navigation as well as irrigation; and river-vessels

may traverse its whole length, from its lower extremity, not far from Mooltan, up past Umritsur, to the most northern limit of the Punjab, at the foot of the Himalayas. The skill of our engineers has also put to rights the native canals which water the thirsty soil of the Derajat; and the 600 miles of canals in the district of Mooltan are now in more efficient order than they ever were, even in the palmy days of the good and wise Sawun Mull. Lower down the valley of the Indus, in Scinde, irrigation canals have likewise been constructed, serving to reclaim portions of the sandy wastes to steady fertility.

Similar beneficent works have been undertaken in the Madras Presidency, though there they assume another form. Vast dams or annicuts across the rivers take the place of the canals of the northern provinces,—the mass of water thus obtained from the rivers being led over the soil in a thousand minor channels. A magnificent work of this kind is the great annicut across the river Godavery, designed and executed by Colonel Cotton, whereby the means of irrigation has been given to large tracts of country, formerly exposed to constant risk of sterility and famine from want of water. The rivers Kistna, Pennair, Cavery, and Venaar, are likewise the scene of great works of this kind, which will utilise their streams, and convert their waters, formerly flowing idly to the sea, into a munificent agent of good to the surrounding population.

In the execution of such works, Profit happily walks hand in hand with Philanthropy; for nothing can be more assured than that no works are so extraordinarily reproductive as those of irrigation. Railways in this respect cannot be put in comparison with them. Canals cost little, and pay well; railways pay badly, and cost a great deal. Of the two canals that have been longest open, the Eastern Jumna pays thirteen per cent, the Western Jumna twenty-seven per cent, upon the capital expended on them. Moreover the land-tax, which forms about one-half of the whole Indian revenue, and suffers severely from a famine, is very largely increased by such

works. For example, during the famine of 1837-38, the Western Jumna Canal irrigated crops worth one million and a half sterling, of which £150,000 was paid to the Government as water-rent and land-tax. The same year, the crops within reach of the irrigation afforded by the Eastern Jumna Canal were valued at half a million of money, £50,000 of which found its way on the same account into the Government Treasury. In other words, these two canals in 1837-38 contributed £1,800,000 worth of food towards the relief of the famine-districts, and at the same time paid £200,000 as revenue to the State. Similar benefits were experienced last year. "Go along the Eastern Jumna Canal," wrote a correspondent during the famine, "and mark the bands of fertility that run along its banks on either side. See the land densely populated and covered with the highest species of cultivation. Go into the villages to whose lands the water reaches, and mark how the brick house takes the place of the mud cottage, and see how the influence of water has produced physical, social, and moral results that seem indeed magical. Truly water is the very light of the picture. Take it away, and the scene darkens; fields become waste, villages depopulated, and men fade off from the face of the land." In further proof of the immense benefits resulting from irrigation, we may state that the crops now dependent for their flourishing condition solely upon the waters of the Ganges Canal are estimated at two millions sterling, and that when that magnificent work is fully perfected, it will be capable of irrigating five millions of acres.

The four great canals which we have described—namely, the Ganges, the Baree Doab, and the Eastern and Western Jumna—measure 1840 miles in length. Anywhere but in India such works would be regarded as worthy of the Titans; but in that vast country, some of whose provinces are more extensive than European kingdoms, their greatness is dwarfed by the enormous requirements of the country. The canals, however, that are still required need not be alarmingly numer-

ous, nor anything like so elaborately expensive as those already made. They may be constructed simply for irrigable and not navigable purposes; and then for a comparatively trifling sum, considering the magnitude of the undertaking and the immense benefits which would flow from it, the large districts most subject to famine would, in a period that may be deemed short, be permanently raised above the fear of such calamities.

So much for the works of irrigation,—of all others the most important for developing the resources of torrid India, and augmenting the wellbeing of its inhabitants. Next in order come the measures for improving the general communications of the country. Through every Presidency, connecting its several provinces and cities, runs a grand trunk-road, which, though originally designed for military purposes, answers all the purposes of commerce. The first and most magnificent work of the kind is that in Northern India, connecting Calcutta with Lahore, a distance of 1250 miles. It follows the ancient highway of conquest and civilisation through the whole length of the Gangetic valley, and piercing far beyond, across the expansive table-land of Sirhind, which has ever been the battle-field of Hindostan, into the land of the Five Rivers. It passes through all our large military stations in Bengal, in the North-west Provinces, and in the Punjab,—crossing the Ganges at Benares and Allahabad, the Sutlej at Loodianah, and the Ravee at Lahore, besides numerous other streams, such as the mountain torrent of the Adjege and the broad swift-flowing Soane. Over these great rivers, communication is maintained by means simply of bridges of boats, but bridges of stone and culverts thrown across smaller rivers, streams, and nullahs, abound. The road is metalled throughout, as smooth and level as a bowling green, and is sufficiently broad to admit of a regiment marching in column upon it with ease; while from either side stately trees cast down upon the wayfarer a grateful shade. The continuation of this road from Lahore to Peshawur, a further distance of 250 miles, is un-

metalled, but the bridges and culverts are all completed, and in every respect the same care has been taken to render it at all times practicable for every kind of conveyance. Next in rank to this imperial highway comes the grand trunk-road running up from Bombay through central India, a distance of 700 miles, to Agra, at which point the two great roads from the eastern and western capitals unite. The condition of this road is similar to that of the Punjab,—in excellent repair, and perfectly passable at all seasons of the year, only not metalled. In some places, especially where it crosses the Western Ghats and the Vindhya range, it might justly be compared, in regard to the engineering skill displayed in overcoming the difficulties presented by nature, with some of the more celebrated mountain roads in Europe. Nor must we forget to mention the roads which have been constructed to the several stations in the Himalayas, and especially the one which connects India with Thibet. Those stations are situated 7000 feet above the level of the sea, and though the roads are carried over mountains of cliffs and rocks enveloped in clouds, and along the edge of precipices more than a thousand feet deep, yet carriages can safely and easily ascend them. When we hear the sneer that if we were driven out of India no traces of our rule would long exist after us, we would point among many other enduring monuments of our power to these magnificent undertakings, which even centuries of neglect would fail to destroy. Compared with the highways of upper and central India, those of the Deccan certainly appear insignificant; yet the road leading to Poonah from Bombay, and that to Bangalore from Madras—the former rivalling those of the Himalayas, and the latter, in the finished mode of its construction, the grand trunk-road between Calcutta and Lahore—would be deemed works of great magnitude in any other country than India. As to roads of lesser pretensions, the bare enumeration of them, together with those that are projected or in course of construction, would be

impossible. In the Punjab alone—to judge of the whole by a part—without taking into account the three principal lines which traverse the country from east to west, as many as 8600 miles of road have been constructed, exclusive of innumerable minor cross and trunk-roads. So vast is India, and so comparatively insignificant do the most gigantic efforts seem to afford a sufficient outlet to her innumerable products and teeming wealth.

It is long since the Ganges was covered with a flotilla of river-steamers, provided by the Government and by the enterprise of private companies, for conveying the great trade which seeks passage on its waters. But it was not till recently that any navigation deserving the name sprang up on the other great river of India. The conquest of Scinde put us in possession of the lower course of the Indus, but it was not till the conquest of the Punjab gave the upper stream also into our possession, that the navigation of the river presented itself as an object of first-rate importance. Ever since the beginning of the century, the gradual extension of our territory in Hindostan has been carrying the frontier of the Bengal Presidency further and further inland, away from that great basis of our power, the sea. But the conquest of the Punjab, the last step in our advance to the north-west, and which removed us further than ever from the Bengal sea, and far even from the broad stream of the Ganges, at once gave us in the Indus a new highway to the ocean, and a much more direct route to Europe. The Indian Government, accordingly, took measures to establish steam-navigation between the sea and the rivers of the Punjab; and for several years steamers have periodically made the passage from Kurrachee to Mooltan. At no great expense the Indus might be made navigable to Attock, and steamers in the rainy season can ascend as far as the military depot at Jhelum. Although this river-communication is still in its infancy, the channel of the Indus is already becoming the great highway between Europe and the north-western provinces of our pos-

sessions. Troops from England arrive and depart by that route; recruits are sent out, and invalids sent home, each year by its stream,—thus avoiding the long and weary march which would otherwise be made by Calcutta. Heavy stores in great quantities, and passengers in large numbers, take the same route, in order to reach a direct point of departure at Bombay; and if, as is proposed, a steam-communication be established from Kurrachee direct to Suez, the importance of the line of the Indus will be still further enhanced, by the still further shortening of the route to Europe. In other quarters also a system of river-navigation is developing itself. Our new province of Pegu is peculiarly adapted for the services of river-steamers. Immediately after the occupation of the province, a portion of the steam-flotilla of the Ganges was transferred to the Irrawaddy, where it now forms the great vehicle for the conveyance of supplies between the frontier and the sea; and measures are in operation for removing the obstacles which impede the navigation of both the Irrawaddy and Bassein rivers, so as to form a continuous line of internal communication throughout the lower parts of Pegu. Regular means of water-communication are likewise being established on the great Burrampooter river, which will much enhance the value of the province of Assam, where the experiment of tea-cultivation is now being made. In Southern India the rivers Nerbudda and Godavery have been surveyed; and although the former offers little hope of its ever being made navigable for purposes of trade, the latter, with its tributary the Wyngunga, presents no such difficulties, and promises to become a chief means of conveying to the sea the valuable cotton crops of Nagpore and Berar.

Nor must we forget, in this sketch of our Indian empire, the works of imperial and industrial utility already executed in our new province beyond the Bay of Bengal. Formerly one of the most flourishing kingdoms of Farther India, Pegu had sadly declined from its old greatness ere it came into possession of the

British. In times not very ancient, Pegu was the ruling power in the peninsula, and its capital, Rangoon, contained a population of 150,000. But its conquest a century ago by the ruder Burmese race caused everything to retrograde. The population decreased, and marks of decay were plainly visible in the pagodas, and other public places, when our troops appeared on the scene. The province occupies the whole delta of the Irrawaddy and Bassein rivers, and is intersected in all directions by their labyrinthine creeks. The summer inundations of the Irrawaddy do not appear to be so great as those of the Ganges, but the surrounding region is for the most part still in a state of nature; and vast forests of magnificent timber, covering the jungly flats, stretch out far as the eye can reach. The soil, alluvial everywhere, is amazingly fertile; and though large tracts are wet and marshy, and in need of draining and protecting embankments, still the appearance of the greater portion, and especially the settled districts, abundantly testifies that even here the soil is thirsting, and production languishes for want of water. "The same landscape under English summer and English snow is not more different from itself than is a Burmese landscape under the April sun—with all things dead and dry, and with not a leaf in sight—from the same in the month of August, when the richness of vegetation and foliage seems almost to surpass that of the Straits." Water, artificially supplied, is the thing needed, to maintain the rich vegetation during the heats of summer; and we doubt not that irrigation will soon be introduced into this new province, as it has already been in the Punjab, and with equally successful results. Everything cannot be done at once; and the mutiny in '57, which obstructed the Government works everywhere, and crippled its financial resources, has delayed many enterprises for the improvement of Pegu. Still, already much has been done and is doing. The rivers and endless creeks of Pegu are its best highways, but the construction of others has not been neglected. A great hill-road over the Yomah range, by the Tounghoo Pass, has been con-

structed for the purpose of obtaining direct military communication by land between the new province and the Presidency of Bengal. A highway has also been completed from Prome up the banks of the river to our strong frontier-station of Meeaday; and three great lines of road—1st, from Rangoon to Prome; 2d, from Rangoon, by Pegu, to Tounghoo; 3d, from Martaban, by Sitang and Shoeygheen, to Tounghoo—have been surveyed. Lights, buoys, and pilots have been provided for the port of Rangoon; and Rangoon itself resounds with the din of workmen, who are adding to it a "new town," more healthily situated than the older portion. The new streets are filling up rapidly, look busy and thriving, and the population is greatly on the increase: "altogether Rangoon in a few years will be one of the pleasantest and most beautiful stations in India." The new port of Dalhousie—deservedly named in compliment to its illustrious projector—is beginning to rise amidst the forest of mangroves which surround it, and which of old covered the spot, and promises to have a brilliant destiny. It is situated at the mouth of the Bassein river; a lighthouse is projected for the dangerous Alguada reef, lying southward of Cape Negrais; and close within the sheltering island of Negrais lies the new harbour, provision for whose wants is being made with all possible expedition. It was on this island of Negrais that the old British Factory stood, which was destroyed in 1759, and the whole English residents massacred, by Alombra, the Burmese conqueror of Pegu, and founder of the existing dynasty of Ava. But, as it has been well remarked, "'the whirligig of Time has brought its revenges.' The kingdom of Pegu, which the rough hunter conquered, has passed from his house to the hands of that Power whose servants he treacherously slew; and the city that is rising on the site of his crime has borrowed a name from the woody dells of Esk."

Lord Dalhousie's administration was distinguished, among other things, by the introduction into our Indian empire of three great engines of social improvement, which the sagacity

and science of recent times have given to the nations of the West—namely, Railways, Uniform Postage, and the Electric Telegraph. Four great trunk-lines of railway have been approved, or are in course of construction; 1st, A line from Calcutta, running north-westwards through the Bengal Presidency to Lahore, in the heart of the Punjab; 2d, A line shooting off south-westwards from some point in the above line, to Bombay, and connecting Bombay with Calcutta; 3d, A line uniting Bombay and Madras; 4th, A line from Madras to the Malabar coast. These lines, when completed, will knit together in close union the various centre-points or *foci* of our vast Indian empire. In our view they are to be regarded as imperial, rather than as industrial undertakings: that is to say, although certain to benefit greatly the industrial resources of the country, they are calculated to enhance in a still greater degree the power and stability of the British rule,—an object which must ever rank second to none. They are not to be judged, therefore, as mere commercial undertakings,—although unquestionably they will greatly economise our military power, by enabling troops to pass from point to point with amazing rapidity, as well as afford outlets for the surplus produce of the various provinces. As imperial trunk-lines of communication, we cordially and unhesitatingly approve of the railways now in progress in India; nevertheless we think the Indian Government will commit an error if it seek to develop the railway system much further for many years to come; for be it remembered, although railroads are most advantageous in the midst of a dense population accustomed to habits of incessant locomotion, and in a country where the goods' traffic consists of articles of high value compared to their bulk, they are of much less use where the mass of the people (as in India) are rural cultivators of very stationary habits, and the bulky low-priced produce of whose fields cannot bear the high rates of railway carriage. Water-communication is cheaper than the minimum charge by railway, and the speed of railways is of no consequence in

the transport of imperishable goods, such as cotton, rice, and grain. Useful as railways are, it is a maxim of common sense that their construction be delayed until more pressing wants and profitable works are supplied. And such wants India has in abundance: for instance, works of irrigation, of which there can hardly be too many,—the making of ordinary roads, in regions where not a wheel-track is at present to be seen, and where the cost of transport is enormous,—and lastly, the clearing of rivers for that cheapest of all means of transit, water-carriage. The cost of a single railway in India would suffice to execute a score of such other more needed and more profitable works. Therefore, while we approve of the resolution to proceed with the trunk-lines connecting the various Presidencies, we venture to think that, with the exception of these, the influence and resources of the Indian Government ought, for some time to come, to be devoted to the promotion of other works of less cost and of greater industrial value.

Of the three great trunk-lines of railway—from Calcutta to Lahore, from Bombay to Calcutta, and from Madras to Bombay—only portions are yet finished,—a hundred miles or so here and there alone being in working order. Upon these, together with minor lines (amongst which may be mentioned that in the Punjab, connecting Umritsur, the holy capital of the Sikhs, with the river Chenab, at the southern extremity of the Baree Doab, the point at which the interchange of traffic passing to and from Kurrachee by way of the Indus would be effected), which as yet have yielded comparatively trifling results, it appears from a late official return that a sum of thirty-five millions sterling has already been expended. But, even when these railways are finished, they will be comparatively valueless without roads, by which the produce of every district may easily reach the trunk-lines, or the immense rivers, to find its way to the sea. What irrigation outlets and petty channels, conveying water to tens of thousands of acres, are to the canal, so are country roads to the railway. Without them, immense districts, even ten times

larger than the county of York, must continue more isolated than the Orkneys now are from the Great Northern. For hundreds of miles round every station, excepting on the grand trunk roads, the only mode of communication is by the common country hackery, — a rough ricketty conveyance, with wooden axletrees and tireless wheels, about on a par in point of workmanship and utility with the carts of the Saxon ceorls; and which is usually drawn along the deep ruts which constitute the road by two diminutive half-starved oxen, at the rate of a mile and a quarter an hour. Suppose, for example, a famine prevailed in Wales; that the railway running nearest to that principality were that between London and Liverpool; that the roads between that line and Caernarvonshire, the centre of the famine-districts, were mere tracks marked out by the wheels of carts passing over the open country, and that the carts were such as we have described the Indian ones to be, and it will be confessed that the difficulties attendant upon supplying the people of Wales with food under such disadvantageous circumstances would be great in the extreme. Precisely such difficulties as these were experienced for want of roads in dozens of large districts in India during the late famine.

Of late years there has been no lack of desire on the part of the Indian Government to engage in public works for the improvement of their territories. To Lord Dalhousie belongs the distinction of having first given systematic development to this noble idea. In the four years of his rule between July 1853 and July 1857, not less than nine millions sterling were spent upon public works in India. It is a wise policy; and even the contraction of Government loans for such a purpose is a judicious proceeding. The public works in progress in India tend to produce an increase of revenue to the State, by increasing the fertility of the country, or opening roads for its produce; and the irrigation-works are so remunerative that they pay at the rate of from twenty to seventy per cent on their outlay

—thus in a few years becoming a direct source of gain to the State, as well as, from the moment of the first opening of their sluices, the greatest of blessings to the native population. To stop such works would be the height of folly. It would be sacrificing twenty per cent to save five per cent (the rate at which money can be obtained on loan)—and that to the detriment of our native subjects, as well as to the loss of our Indian Government.

Thanks to the Commission appointed by Lord Dalhousie, the postal system in India has been freed from the great defects which formerly adhered to it, and has been assimilated to the most approved systems existing in Europe. Over all India there now prevails a uniform single rate of postage of half an anna ($\frac{3}{4}$d.) for letters, and of an anna ($1\frac{1}{2}$d.) for newspapers, irrespective of distance; and at the same time the convenient system of postage-stamps has been substituted for that of cash-payments. Recently, too, the Home Government have consented to the adoption of a uniform rate of postage, payable in one sum, on letters between England and India,—the rate being sixpence per half-ounce. Regulations of this kind add so much to the happiness and convenience of the people that they are not to be tested solely by the principles of profit and loss; nevertheless we may state that, since their adoption, the correspondence has increased upwards of twenty-five per cent, and the loss of revenue has been less than was expected. It is not easy to realise the extent of these postal reforms: Rowland Hill has been quite eclipsed in India. In England a single letter is conveyed to any part of the British Isles (at the utmost a distance of 700 miles) for a penny. But in India, a single letter is conveyed over distances immeasurably greater—from Peshawur on the borders of Afghanistan to the southernmost village of Cape Comorin, or from Debrooghur in Upper Assam to Kurrachee at the mouth of Indus—distances of two thousand miles—for three farthings! Three years ago the postage chargeable on the same letter in India would have been a

shilling, or sixteen times the present charge. Again, since the uniform rate of postage has been established between England and India, the Scotch recruit, whose regiment happens to be stationed on our farthest frontier at Peshawur, may write to his mother at John o'Groat's House, and may send his letter free to her for sixpence. Three years ago the same sum would not have carried his letter beyond Lahore!

The name of Dr W. O'Shaughnessy will descend to posterity as the originator of the Electric Telegraph in our Indian Empire. It was in November 1853 that the work of construction commenced; and so rapidly did it proceed, that in little more than three years 4000 miles of electric telegraph had been placed in working order. The difficulties encountered in laying down telegraphic lines in India are such as have no parallel in the civilised and cultivated countries of Europe. Throughout Central India, as Dr O'Shaughnessy states, "the country crossed opposes enormous difficulties to the maintenance of any line. There is no metalled road; there are few bridges; the jungles also in many places are deadly for at least half the year; there is no police for the protection of the lines. From the loose black cotton soil of Malwa to the rocky wastes of Gwalior and the precipices of the Sindwa Ghats, every variety of obstacles has to be encountered." About seventy principal rivers have been crossed in the course of these telegraphic lines, some by cables, others by wires extended between masts. And some of those crossings are of great extent,—the cable across the Soane measuring 5300 yards, and the crossing of the Toombudra river being not less than two miles in length. Although the construction of the lines has been rapid, their solidity has not been overlooked. For three-fourths of the distance from Madras to Calcutta the line is superior in solidity to any ever erected elsewhere, and on some portions of its length its structure is really superb. For instance, in the Madras Presidency, the line for 174 miles is borne on stone-

masonry pillars capped with granite, while for 332 miles it is sustained on single slabs of superb granite, sixteen feet high above ground. The tariff of charges on the Indian lines is cheaper than that adopted in any other country having lines of such length as to permit of comparison. As regards rapidity in the transmission of intelligence, the Indian lines have already accomplished performances equal to those achieved on the American lines. For example, the first bulletin of Overland news has repeatedly been sent from Bombay to Calcutta, 1600 miles, in forty minutes; despatches from Calcutta have been delivered to the Governor-General at Ootacamund, during the rainy season, in three hours,—the distance being 200 miles greater than from London to Sebastopol; and there is never a failure in delivering the Mail news from England *via* Bombay within twelve hours. The political and military advantages which our Indian Government derives from the possession of such an engine of power are too obvious to call for remark. So beneficial, indeed, has the system been found in India, that since 1855 the extent of telegraphic lines has been almost doubled.

The astonishing rate at which the consumption of raw cotton is increasing in the British Isles, and still more the convulsion which is dissevering the American Union and has stopped our supplies from the Southern States, make all reflecting men turn an anxious eye to the growth of cotton in our Indian empire. The quantity of cotton used in the British manufactories is more than eighty per cent of the whole amount produced in the United States; so that, even apart from the present commotions in America, the mere fluctuations of the seasons seriously affect the prosperity of our cotton-lords and their myriads of mill-workers. It has now become indispensable that a manufacture upon which four millions of our people are dependent, should be placed beyond the influence of great disasters by the introduction of a new supply of the raw material,—especially if that new supply could be drawn from

our own dominions, so as to render us less dependent on the slaveocracy of America. We believe that such a result is within our reach. Hitherto the free-grown cotton imported from Egypt and India has amounted to but an eighteenth part of the total quantity annually imported into this country; but it must be borne in mind that this free cotton is an increasing quantity, and that there is reason now to expect that its increase will be very rapid. The recent acquisition of the rich cotton-districts of Nagpore and Berar has added greatly to the extent of cotton-growing soil within our dominions, — indeed, all the good cotton-districts of India are now under our control. A railway is in process of construction from Bombay to the heart of the cotton country; while the river Godavery, now being rendered navigable, will afford a still cheaper but more roundabout outlet to the markets of Europe. The cultivators are miserably poor, and considerably apathetic; but if agents of the merchants were to settle in the districts, to aid the ryots with their advice and occasional advances on their crops, and to see that the cleaning and pressing of the cotton were properly performed preparatory to the long voyage, great and happy results would assuredly flow both to the Indian peasantry and to our manufacturing interests at home.

The culture of tea has obtained considerable attention and support from the Indian Government. In Assam the cultivation of tea has prospered in a remarkable degree; and the plant has also been largely introduced into the upper districts of the North-west Provinces. Recently Mr Fortune was employed to bring plants and seeds in large quantities from China, and to engage Chinese workmen for the manufacture of the tea. Very large quantities of tea are now manufactured every year, which sell readily at a high price; and there is reason to believe that the cultivation of the tea-plant will spread widely in future years, and that the trade in tea produced in India will become considerable in extent. The vast extent of India, and the diversities of soil and climate existing

within its limits, are eminently favourable for the production of valuable crops not indigenous to the country, and the Government is more and more directing its attention to the promotion of such undertakings. An experiment has been made for the growth of silk, and workmen skilled in the business, mulberry plants, and every other requisite, have been provided by the Government. The growth of flax has likewise been largely encouraged, and the cultivation of it has already extended to very considerable dimensions. Agricultural societies are beginning to appear,—various kinds of seeds are being introduced from Europe for the improvement of the cultivation in certain provinces,—and Merino rams have been procured by the Government from Australia for improving the breed of sheep. A breed of sheep has also been introduced into our new province of Pegu, and the experiment promises to be very successful. The natives show a strong desire to possess them; they thrive perfectly, and are singularly fruitful. The absence of sheep in that province has hitherto been severely felt by the troops and others employed there, but this privation in respect of food appears now likely to be soon removed.

The mineral riches of India are still almost entirely in an undeveloped state. The search for sparkling gems has in all ages been eagerly engaged in, but the thousand-fold more valuable seams of coal and iron have remained unsought for and untouched up to present times. A beginning, however, has at last been made, and the last and best, though poetically maligned, Age of Iron is about to spread its blessings over India. There is no doubt of the existence of coal in abundance, and rich mines of iron have likewise been discovered. Indeed Central India, from Nerbudda to Assam, abounds alike in ironstone and coal-beds. "Coal occurs extensively in ten provinces," says Dr J. M'Clelland, "namely, Tenasserim, Arracan, Orissa (Cuttack), Bengal Proper, Burdwan, Sylhet, Assam, Raginchal, Behar, and Nerbudda. In every instance iron ores —either the common clay ironstone, or red or yellow ironstone,

containing from 30 to 50 per cent of iron—occur with the coal, or extensively in the same district." And Mr Williams, geological surveyor to the Indian Government, reports that "the actual cost of mining coal in India, including agency and rent, is one rupee (2s.) per ton, and the cost of mining iron would not exceed three shillings per ton. It could be mined in large quantities [for instance, in the Soane district] for much less." Taking coal and iron together, at the average Indian rates, the cost of the two at the pit's mouth is not more than half what it is in Scotland or Wales. Labour, too, is plentiful and cheap, for population is somewhat in excess of the means of employment; a large portion of it is ever ready to go anywhere or do anything for a mere fraction of the wages that could be offered in this country; and we have the testimony of engineers to the merits of the patient and clever Hindoo at mining, smelting, and the other processes of the iron manufactures. In the great railway works now in progress in India, an ample market is opened for the produce both of the iron and coal mines. But the great obstacle is the want of roads. The distance and difficulty of access to the minerals are formidable impediments to their availability; and nothing but the gradual extension of railways will bring these rich stores into extensive use.

One word more, on a matter which may appear unimportant, but which is not so. We mean the Woods of India. For generations to come the Indian forests must supply a hundred and fifty millions of people with fuel, besides all the other requirements of wood-work, ship-building, &c. Hence it behoves the Government to watch over the vast living stores of timber and firewood. In all countries, at one time or other, the face of the earth has been mantled with forests; but the first result of the establishment of civilisation in a country is to produce a want of that very article which was formerly over-plenteous. Even in many parts of North America a want of wood is now much felt; and if we turn away from "modern instances" to the old empire of China, we find that wood is there

so scarce that fires are in little use, and the deficit of household caloric has to be compensated by a multiplicity of clothing. It was manifestly the design of Providence, in thus mantling the face of the earth with primeval woods, to keep man in comfort until his wits became sufficiently sharpened and his energies developed to enable him to discover and avail himself of the better mineral fuel beneath his feet. And precisely as the forests are cleared, and the surface of the earth becomes more and more devoted to raising food for man, does the revelation take place of those fuel-stores below, which Nature prepared as a means of permitting a larger population on the face of the globe than was otherwise possible. In the New World each member of the immigrant Anglo-Saxon race was left to do what was right in his own eyes, and (as Paddy would say) "wrong too if he likes;" but we are glad to observe that the Indian Government has recently taken measures for the preservation and renewal of forests in various parts of the country, so as at once to prevent unthrifty management of them, and to make adequate provision for the wants of the future. It is also believed that, by replacing the woods which formerly covered many districts now treeless, the climate will be improved and the productiveness of the soil increased. Trees, by their thousand leaflets and tendrils, absorb electricity, and promote the flux and reflux of this life-giving element between soil and sky. They also attract the clouds and the dews; and if they do not actually increase the fall of rain, they at least induce more frequent showers. Woods also economise the moisture which falls, acting as reservoirs that slowly distil their waters over the adjoining slopes. M. Valserres has just reported to the French Government that, in consequence of the destruction of the woods in France for fuel and other purposes, instead of gentle rains falling, as a general rule only violent storms occur, tropical in their fury, which damage the crops, and produce disastrous inundations; while, from want of woods, the rain is quickly evaporated, so that the soil becomes baked, and a great many springs have dried up.

These phenomena, on a much vaster scale, are familiar to us in India; and the excessive drought in the North-west Provinces in 1860, followed by the excessive rains and disastrous inundations last summer, unquestionably owed their intensity in part to the above-mentioned causes. "The process of denudation," says the *Times* correspondent, "is proceeding in the North-west with great rapidity. The mango topes in some districts are cut down to meet the pressure of a bad season, and wherever this occurs the water-level sinks, wells become dry, and springs disappear. Perhaps there is no more serious danger now menacing the prosperity of those provinces. The Ceylonese complain of the same blunder. The forests are falling to make way for plantations, and districts formerly well watered are becoming arid. There seems every probability that it is this practice which has destroyed in the course of ages the ancient fertility of Scinde. At all events, in districts now rainless the inhabitants used to take precautions against rain." The work of reclothing barren districts with woods was first commenced in earnest in the Punjab. In constructing the Baree Doab canal, Lord Dalhousie gave directions that an extra space of from 300 to 400 feet on either side of the canal and its branches should be set apart for avenues: so that, of the 19,000 acres occupied by the line of the canal, 12,000 are devoted to groves. By his directions, also, arrangements were made for the preservation and economising of the tracts of forest already existing,—for the planting of fuel copses near the principal cantonments, and of groves around all public buildings, as well as at intervals along the main lines of road. The forests of Oude have hitherto furnished our chief supplies of timber for public purposes in Hindostan, and as these have now been brought under our control, they will henceforth be carefully regulated and preserved. The same wise system has been adopted with success in the Madras Presidency. Trees of all kinds have been introduced from Australia, and from all parts of the world at all similar in climate. Plantations have been formed covering many square

miles, and roads and canals have been lined with beautiful avenues, a solace to travellers and a source of revenue to the State. Large tracts of barren sands and bleak moorland have been sown with the seeds of quick-growing shrubs, which already provide firewood and furnish employment for hundreds of poor villagers. Hedges also are being introduced, or improved, to prevent the trespass of cattle and the consequent affrays that so frequently happen. Future generations will reap the benefit of these beneficent labours.

Justice is proverbially said to be lame everywhere, but perhaps nowhere is she so lame or blind as in India. Our ideas of justice, and the perfection which we demand in its administration, are such as naturally suggest themselves to an Englishman, himself belonging to a race where the moral sense is preeminently developed, and to a country where that high morality is sedulously respected and cultivated by our legal institutions. In India we cannot expect any such perfect machinery for the attainment of justice. English justice has there to pass through a foreign medium. It is administered in the midst of a lower race, and in the main by members of that lower race. In India there are twenty courts composed entirely of natives, from the judge to the messenger, for every one presided over by an Englishman. All the witnesses, too, are natives. In fact, the services of the natives can no more be dispensed with than we could see without eyes or work without hands. And yet the character of the Indian race, we do not hesitate to say, is more unfavourable for a right administration of justice than that of any other civilised people in the world. Their cunning, whether in the perpetration or concealment of an action, is fathomless; upon no people has the faculty of extemporarily inventing and gravely telling the most plausible fictions been more abundantly bestowed; and to acquire wealth, they will stick neither at forgery, perjury, nor torture. Though they shrink from the least pain with fear, yet they can coolly inflict it on others without pity or remorse. To such men, by the

necessity of our position in India, are the powers of the law in the first instance always delegated. And, though obviously an extreme case, there was little exaggeration in the condition of affairs indicated by one of the witnesses before the Indian Colonisation Committee of the House of Commons last year, when he said, "If I wanted to get a man murdered in Bengal, I should have to pay about three thousand rupees (£300) to the police."

Without native agency, in fact, the courts presided over by Europeans could not remain open. The mild Hindoo and meek Mohammedan are everywhere, except on the bench. The Amlah, or subordinate judicial officers, are the very senses of the judge, who can neither see nor hear but what they please. The shrewd swarthy-featured Sheristadar, the head Hindoo official —whom the uninitiated, to judge by his placid benevolent countenance, would take to be as immaculate as his snowy-white turban—holding virtually in his own hands all the patronage of the court, surrounds himself with his relatives, friends, or dependants, through whom communications must pass before they reach the judge. These harpies, being poorly paid, are ravenous of rupees, and a silver key alone can open a passage through this cordon of corruption. No moral sense, no feeling of honour, restrains them from taking bribes. In and around the court, when a case is about to come on, witnesses and the officers of the court are bought over. A native landowner, against whom a serious charge was pending, was known to walk into a court followed by his chuprassies, or attendants, carrying 3000 rupees. When he walked out again the money was gone, but the case was won: the wheels of the judicial machine had been so well oiled that not a hitch occurred. Venality is the leprous spot that vitiates our administration of justice in India—a spot which cannot be effaced until the character of the natives has undergone an improvement amounting to regeneration.

All the proceedings in the courts are recorded on stamped

paper, the sale of which produces a considerable revenue to the Government. The plaintiff's statement, the defendant's answer, the evidence on both sides, are recorded without the intervention or knowledge of the judge, who ordinarily makes acquaintance with the case for the first time when the papers are laid before him for decision. The initiated alone know the trouble, the delay, and the expense attendant upon each of the above steps, for which the subordinate officers of the court always pocket something besides their fees. The mode in which the evidence is got up may be deemed worthy of a few words. Perhaps there are no *bona fide* witnesses on either side to the transaction:—no matter, the case can go on, for professional witnesses in any number can be obtained at from two anas (threepence) per diem apiece, and upwards. If the case is an important one, and the witnesses are highly skilled, they may receive as much as one rupee, or two shillings, a-day. They take a fortnight or so to study the case; they invent a variety of incidental circumstances to prove each point —a dozen lies to establish one; they consider these incidents in every possible light, taking care to allow slight discrepancies to creep into their different parts, to avoid the appearance of collusion; and thus prepare themselves for any questions that might be put to them. In a room full of chattering natives, or in a corner of the court, this evidence is taken down by one of the subordinate officers, who, while so engaged, squats on his heels and makes use of his knees as a desk, with the witnesses grouped around him in similar picturesque positions. The opposite party's pleader may possibly be amongst them, but this delicate proceeding never takes place within the hearing of the judge,—who, if in court, may probably be listening to another subordinate gabbling over as fast as he can a handful of dirty documents—depositions, probably, manufactured as above described. If it be desired that the case should be called in six weeks, or delayed for a year or two, in not a few cases it can be accomplished by the suitor who has the longest purse. We

know of a suit that was pending before the courts at Allipore, close to the residence of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, for twelve years! Cases are often on the file for six years. The head native officer can arrange these affairs very much as he pleases. But when the suit does come on for hearing, what means are there, from such records as we have described, of arriving at a just decision? An old native judge was accustomed, in cases of such difficulty, to adopt a very curious rule of conduct for his guidance. After hearing the proceedings read, and the pleadings on both sides, being well informed how such evenly-balanced suits were generally prepared, he would look up at the white punkah or fan swinging listlessly to and fro over his head, intently count the flies perched upon it, and, if he found them to be odd in number, would give his verdict for the plaintiff,—if even, for the defendant!

It takes a long time to alter an old and deep-rooted system, the growth of generations. But some at least of the causes which contribute so much to perpetuate the inefficiency and corruption of the Indian courts could without much difficulty be diminished or removed. Trained judges, an independent bar, and *viva voce* proceedings after the English fashion, would be practicable, and, we think, sensible reforms. If introduced, they would tend very considerably not only to diminish bribery and detect perjury, but also largely to reduce the time during which cases at present remain on the files, which in most courts are burdened with as many as six hundred waiting for decision.

These embarrassments in the administration of justice in India weigh with peculiar hardship upon the owners or holders of land. No class of the population are so constantly engaged in litigation. They must, in fact, maintain a regular establishment of agents and advocates simply to look after their law business. Every day while the courts are sitting, though the landowners may not, and as a rule do not, attend themselves, their mooktears and vakeels are always present, if they are not

engaged; and as a part of the day's proceedings, before the evening drive or ride, the reports of the several cases that have been heard are delivered to the Sahib, and instructions received for the next day. Is it therefore surprising to be assured, that one of the largest items of expenditure on account of an Indian estate is that which represents the cost of its legal proceedings? Unfortunately, in the present state of the law, this is not to be avoided; for at present it is impossible to hold land in India without being constantly engaged in the courts. Englishmen generally have as their legal opponents natives, who, whenever they enter the courts, think it essentially necessary, no matter what the nature of their case may be, to swear falsely, or else to get others to do so for them. Fictitious suits, sustained by every kind of false evidence, and conducted by every species of corruption, are most common; and of course the temptation is very great for the landholders to meet and to disprove such suits by the same means that are employed against them. As to the forgery of documents, the skill of the people is perfectly marvellous. Documents of any age, and written in any required character, can be produced as easily, and almost as rapidly, as this page is printed. A recent number of the *Calcutta Review* records a case in which a prisoner was acquitted by the highest Court of Appeal, "although to find him innocent involved the necessity of pronouncing a heap of letters, upwards of one hundred in number, and purporting to be in the handwriting of eight or ten different and well-known individuals, to be forgeries." The Calcutta correspondent of the *Times* recently made special mention of considerable seizures of forged stamps and documents and seals, together with other implements appertaining to the "trade," which had been made in Midnapore and other districts. "One of these forgers, who had for years prosperously followed his profession, lived next door to the darogah or chief police-officer of the place. When his house, owing to the active exertions of the Mofussil agent of the firm of Jardine, Skinner, & Co., was searched, there were found in his posses-

sion two hundred forged documents, relating to almost every estate in the district, and fifty-three forged seals, some of them going back to Aurungzebe, and all of them dated more than sixty years ago, so as to support claims dating before the Decennial settlement. In Bancoorah and in Kishnaghur other very extensive seizures have been made. When it is considered that the possession of land in these districts, all of them more or less indigo districts, often depends upon the documentary evidence produced, it is impossible to feel surprise at the state of disorder and confusion into which those districts have fallen."*

But great as those evils are, the most earnest and urgent demand made by our countrymen who have settled in India is, that they may have the right to purchase from the Government the land upon which they are settled, and of which they are at present only the nominal owners. Let us, they say, be allowed to redeem the land-tax, and thereafter escape the never-ending visits of the Government collector by holding our estates in fee-simple. A few years ago, when Lord Stanley was Secretary of State for India, it was thought that this question had been finally settled. His Lordship gave the sanction of his authority to a comprehensive scheme, having for its object not only the redemption of the land-tax by all who were desirous to do so, but also the purchasing in fee-simple of waste lands, in which India abounds, and which, though waste, could with the aid of capital be rendered as productive as any in the country; and he impressed upon the Governor-General the desirableness of making the necessary arrangements in order to carry the scheme into practice without delay. Unfortunately to this day the great boon which was thus held out to English capitalists in the East has never been realised. But we venture to say that it must be accorded to them before long. The question might have been settled long ago if the Indian Civil Service had not stepped in to paint the terrible dangers which would,

* *Times*, October 17, 1861.

in their opinion, infallibly attend such a measure. "The land-revenue," say they, "is the great pillar of the State, and if we cut it away, the whole edifice will soon come tumbling down. That, it is true, may not happen in our time; but we have no right to bring ruin upon those who are to come after us." In other words, if people in India were allowed the privilege of purchasing the fee-simple of their estates, the revenue of the country would be sapped, and the next generation or so after our time would find itself without funds sufficient to carry on the government of the country. People who believe this must suppose that the majority of the hundred and fifty million ryots, who cannot even sow their crops without borrowing, would redeem the land-tax if they had permission to do so. But the fact is entirely the other way; for only a fortunate few at the utmost could do so, and they would mostly be English capitalists engaged in developing the resources of the country. The natives, who hold the greater part of the land in their possession, would as soon think of buying estates in the moon as they would of purchasing the fee-simple of the land upon which they dwelt. Thus, in reality, the boon would simply be one of which English capitalists would take advantage—men of energy, who have made India what she is, and who only ask for fair play to make her yet tenfold more wealthy and prosperous.

Here we conclude this sketch of our great Indian Empire. Having occupied so much space with the exposition of the leading features of the subject, it is impossible to advert in any way to the probable future of the people or their British rulers. Now that railways are beginning to span the land, awaking, tossing together, and amalgamating the different tribes and peoples of India,—now that commerce and wealth are slowly beginning to accumulate in native hands, and that natives in ever-increasing numbers are taking part in the administration of the country,—the future, the goal towards which all this is tending, must more and more press itself upon the considera-

tion of thoughtful beholders. Suffice it to say, however, that India promises to continue for many generations subject to the ascendancy of the British race, and that it behoves us to fulfil the concomitant duty of benefiting the people over whom we rule. A cheerful and noble though arduous task; and we doubt not that many of the brightest names on the beadroll of England will continue to be contributed by the lordly bands of her sons who go forth to uphold her strange and mighty Empire in the East.

THE NATIONAL LIFE OF CHINA

OF the making of books on China—as on other subjects—there has been no end; but how little reliable knowledge is to be extracted from the majority of those works! They are either sketches of individual life and personal adventure at some one of the five seaports recently opened to us—books meant to be readable, and nothing more; or, if the general character of the people and their history be attempted to be drawn, it is done in such a narrow spirit, and with such a bold defiance of facts, as seriously to mislead the unwary and wholly dissatisfy the reflecting.

One of the most common results of this erroneous teaching is the belief that rebellion is something unique and unparalleled in the history of China. A rebellion in China! Such an event seems to our press and public the most extraordinary thing in the world. And they stand in natural amazement at the supposed spectacle of the "immobile" empire of China now, for the first time for four thousand years, starting from its quiescence, and inaugurating all at once so stupendous a change. It takes a little of the *couleur de rose* off the affair, however, to learn, what is the fact, that a score of such dynastic revolutions have already taken place in China, and that some of these exhibit features substantially the same as those displayed in the present Rebellion. The Chinese Empire, in fact, existing throughout four thousand years, has purged and repurged itself

again and again; dynasty after dynasty has grown effete and fallen; and both in its religion and in its general history, the empire presents a more remarkable (because more long-continued) series of changes than is anywhere else to be met with in the world. Let us glance, then, at the characteristic features of this empire and its people. Let us look at its history, its politics, its religion, its social customs, and its remarkable system of national education. As in duty bound, we shall "begin at the beginning;" but we shall not waste time upon those fabulous tales and cosmogonies which some European writers so carefully commence with, but which are utterly repudiated by the majority of the Chinese themselves.

The limits of China Proper are nearly as marked as those of India, and the country seems to have been destined by nature for the development of an isolated and continuous civilisation. Bounded on the south and east by a tempestuous sea, on the north by vast and herbless deserts, on the west by lofty mountain-chains, China forms a nearly circular area of from five to six hundred leagues in diameter, shut in from the rest of the world. Rising in terraces as it recedes from the sea, watered from west to east by two great navigable rivers, traversed longitudinally by their tributaries, dotted with lakes, and intersected by numerous mountain-ranges, this immense region embraces the climates and productions of nearly all latitudes, as well as the inestimable riches of the mineral kingdom. Hence this old empire of China, as large as all Europe exclusive of Turkey, has always sufficed for itself, and developed its power in itself and by itself. It is true that since the European nations became great consumers of tea, they have in return imported into China foreign products unknown to the ancient inhabitants, and which have become necessary luxuries to the present population; yet, notwithstanding, the interchange of products between its different provinces (some of them as large as European kingdoms) might suffice for the industrial and commercial wants of the people,—and hence,

among other reasons, the great indifference shown by the Chinese Government for foreign commerce.

The Mongolian tribe who in remote ages wandered into this country, differ now from the rest of their race in having countenances less flattened and more expressive, and in general are as superior in physical as in intellectual qualities to the population of the adjoining regions;—a proof, on the largest scale, of the elevating influences of civilisation upon both the body and mind of man. They have black, strong, lank hair,—that of the females being often very beautiful; a flat nose, small oblique eyes and thin eyelids, round and prominent cheeks, a pointed chin, and little beard. Their constitution is of a coarse grain; consequently they are much less sensitive than Europeans, and also less subject to diseases. At what period they first broke off from the great central mass of mankind, it is impossible to state with accuracy; but, entering their future empire from the north-west, their earliest seat was the provinces now called Shensy (anciently Tsin) and Honan, which constituted the realm of their first king, Fohi. At this early period they seem to have been a pastoral people, living on the produce of their flocks and herds; but Fohi's successor taught them the art of agriculture, and induced them to cultivate and settle upon the land. Spreading southwards, they next occupied all the country to the north of the Yang-tse-keang, but suffered dreadfully for many years from a great inundation; and thence gradually penetrated to the full limits of the present empire,—the southern provinces not being wholly subdued and civilised until subsequent to the Christian era. Everywhere—Egypt perhaps excepted—we find that vast forests have preceded the reign of civilised man on earth. Every one has heard of the ancient forests of Europe and of the New World; the old Hindoo poems are full of descriptions of the primeval woods which overspread the Indian Peninsula; and in the early history of China, also, we find that the new-comers from the north-west were forced to level before them vast forests, in order to reclaim

the soil from the dominion of nature. Still more remarkable, we find that before the Chinese there existed an aboriginal race, which the Chinese had to drive before them in their progress southwards. These the new-comers styled "Sons of the Wilderness" and "Bearers of great bows;" and under the first of these titles (in Chinese, Meaou-tse) they still exist in an almost savage state in the high and inaccessible mountains of Western China; having thus lived for four thousand years in contact with Chinese civilisation, yet refusing all amalgamation; and illustrating the extraordinary fact, that there are certain tribes of men against whom the waves of civilisation break for ever in vain, and whose destiny it seems to be only to tenant the earth till a superior race arrive to dispossess them.

Nothing is more perplexing to the historian, or more monstrous to the eye of modern science, than the chronology of the Hindoos, with its kalpas, its divine ages, its reigns of Manou, and its nights of Brahma, and, finally, its assertion that this present world has existed for five and a half millions of years, and has yet to exist for upwards of four billions more. In Chinese history this difficulty is little felt. Some native historians, indeed, think they can trace back the course of events for six thousand years before our era: but the "Men of Letters," comprising the great bulk of the educated classes of the nation, either reject these traditions or refuse to pronounce upon them. Like their great master, Confucius, they abstain from all speculative questions, and content themselves with rigorously establishing the authentic history of their nation, which, they are agreed, goes back with perfect certainty to the sixty-first year of the reign of Hoang-te, 2637 years before the birth of Christ.*

We have not space to detail the chronological elements which

* The *civil* or *equinoxial* year, adopted by the Chinese from the highest antiquity, consists of 365¼ sidereal days, corresponding exactly with our Julian year. Sixty of these years form a *cycle;* and thus the common year 1852 corresponds with the 49th year of the 75th sexagenary cycle of the

serve as a base for Chinese history; but we agree with M. Pauthier in holding that "no nation possesses, or ever possessed, a body of history so complete and authentic as the people of China."[2] And this will not appear surprising when it is understood that the intelligent registration of events has in all ages been honoured and favoured in that country, and that since the reign of Hoang-te there has existed in the capital of the empire a Tribunal for the writing of History, whose members, chosen from the most distinguished of the Men of Letters, enjoy several prerogatives, as well as immovability from office, and other wise precautions against the menaces or seductions of power. In most of the provincial capitals there are kept *Ephemerides*, which go back to upwards of two centuries before our era (at which time, as we shall afterwards see, the existing records were destroyed), and which offer, says M. Pauthier, "the same exactness in regard to the observations then possible as those of our Bureau of Longitudes." In cities even of the third order, a daily register is kept of all meteorological events, as well as a separate one for the troubles, sieges, revolts, fires, and other calamities "which flesh is heir to." In fine, to quote the words of Father Amiot, one of the most laborious and most learned of the French missionaries,—"The Chinese annals are preferable to the historical monuments of all other nations, because they are the most free from fables, the most ancient, the most generally received, the most abundant in facts. They are worthy of all confidence, for they have epochs fixed by astronomical observations," and every other means of insuring accuracy. And lastly, "these annals are themselves the most authentic literary work in the world, because there is not in the world one which has been worked at for the space of eighteen centuries,—which has been revised, corrected, aug-

Chinese. The Emperor Kien-long caused a critical examination of Chinese chronology to be made by the *College of the Han-lin*, or Imperial Academy, and by all the literary bodies of his capital, the result of which was published in the Imperial palace in 1767.

mented, in proportion as new discoveries were made, by so great a number of learned men, acting in concert, authorised by royalty, and provided with every possible assistance." The whole period embraced by these annals is upwards of four thousand years,—an immense time for the life of an empire, during which there has been a succession of twenty-two dynasties, and as many great revolutions.

The prejudices of country are often serious impediments to the right perception of the truths of history; and we are so deeply impressed with the pre-eminence of Europe in civilisation, that, like the Greeks, we are prone, in our comprehensive contempt, to characterise all extra-European nations as "barbarians." In all things relating to political government, especially, we have been taught to regard Asia as essentially despotic, and the centralised government of China as synonymous with the most grinding oppression. But the fact is not so; and however the opinions of most writers support this notion, the facts which they publish are quite inconsistent with it.

When the full light of history first breaks upon the Chinese empire, we find the form of government not hereditary, but elective. The sovereign, aided by the advice of his grandees, nominated a successor to the throne; and no humbleness of parentage or occupation was allowed to hinder the choice from falling on the person most distinguished for his wisdom and goodness. Thus the Emperor Yao rejects his own son, because "deficient in rectitude and fond of disputing," and, after consulting with his ministers, selects Shun, "born of an obscure family," but who, under trying domestic circumstances, had comported himself with uniform excellence,—gives him his two daughters in marriage, and, after a season of probation in this elevated station, appoints him his associate and successor in the empire. Shun also, in like manner, selects Yu, a man of humble station, to be his prime minister, and afterwards raises him to the throne as a reward for his great ability and energy in draining off, by means of canals and other works,

the waters of the immense Inundation which holds so prominent a place in the early annals of China. "He who observes the law," said this emperor, "is happy; he who violates it is unhappy: *unhappiness is the echo or shadow of guilt.* Virtue is the basis of government; and government consists in procuring for the people the necessaries of life, — in rendering them virtuous,—in procuring for them the profitable use of all things, and in preserving them from everything hurtful to their health and life."

In default of those institutions which we call *constitutional,* to limit the imperial authority in China, there exist in the canonical books of that ancient monarchy—that is to say, in the revered writings of its sages, which have had the force of laws since the earliest times—a vast number of passages thoroughly popular in spirit and most menacing to tyrants. Thus, after the empire became hereditary—which change was effected, not in consequence of the ambition of any sovereign, but by the grandees, in order to avoid the practical inconveniences of the system of election — we read of several monarchs being deposed on account of their crimes, sometimes with and sometimes without a change of dynasty. Such examples have received the express sanction of the sages of China; the people of old were imbued with the same spirit; and in the "Book of Verses" we find some most patriotic invectives against the tyrant Li-wang, written before the sentence of deposition ultimately overtook him. This is as it ought to be. Disgraceful excess of power may occur under any system,—it is the deportment of the people in the circumstances which reflects credit or discredit on a country. When Nero set fire to Rome for his own amusement, his conduct was indeed odious and contemptible; but what is to be thought of the people of the Eternal City, who allowed the tyrant to put the torch to their dwellings with impunity? The tyranny of Nero was an accidental phenomenon of the imperial regime of Rome, but this instance of his subjects' servility was a type,

a proof for all time, of the national degradation. All history, when read aright, shows that there is an intimate relation between the conduct of governments and that of their people; that if the latter discharge their duty, the former seldom transgress theirs; and, in fine, that there are no tyrants where there are no slaves.

The *Shoo-king*, one of the canonical books of the Chinese, preserves many sayings and conversations of these early kings and their ministers; and we find there so much simple wisdom, such abnegation of self, such a superiority to all personal interests, and such love for the public good, as justly to excite admiration. "Seek to obtain the suffrages of the people," said a Chinese minister to his master, four thousand years ago, "and do not alienate them from you for the sake of following your own inclinations. . . . What heaven thinks right manifests itself by what the people thinks right;—what the people thinks worthy of reward or punishment, indicates what heaven wishes to punish or reward. There is an intimate communication between heaven and the people: let those, then, who govern the people be attentive and wary." Is not this maxim of the Mongolian sage an exact equivalent for the celebrated *Vox populi vox Dei*, which is becoming more and more a proverb among the modern kingdoms of Europe?

Under their early monarchs the Chinese were a united people, living quietly upon the patriarchal principle of filial obedience to the sovereign. As population increased, however, and the limits of the empire extended, the more distant or more vigorous of the provincial rulers became virtually independent. As in most other countries, the feudal regime came to supplant the patriarchal; and under the three dynasties that followed the great Yu (for after him the crown became hereditary), the extent of the imperial dominions depended upon the talent of individual rulers and the fortune of war. The last monarch of each of the two first dynasties was dethroned by the people, whom their crimes or oppression had roused into rebellion—

one of them perishing, like Sardanapalus, amidst the flames of his palace. In the days of Confucius—who lived during the third of these dynasties (that of Chow), between five and six hundred years before our era—China was divided into a number of little kingdoms or feudal states, dependent, or which ought to have been dependent, upon a sovereign kingdom *situated in the middle of them;* and hence, it is said, the title Kingdom of the Middle has continued to be given to the empire down to the present day. China at this time was in great danger of being permanently split up into a number of small kingdoms, which, instead of pouring down its civilisation in one grand stream, would have scattered it into puny rills, liable to be arrested or turned aside by the least obstacle. Instead of a Mongolian giant, remaining immovable against all attack, there would have been a series of active dwarfs, more potent to harass one another than to preserve themselves. In short, there can be little doubt that had China then (or even five centuries afterwards, when again threatened with a similar calamity) separated into a number of independent states, the country would have been wholly overrun and subdued by the roving hordes of Central Asia, and, like the empires of the West, have had its ancient civilisation submerged by a flood of barbarism.

From this danger China was saved by one of those extraordinary men whom Providence raises up at distant intervals to accomplish its designs. During the last reigns of the Chow dynasty, the Tsin state had been gradually overshadowing its neighbours; and at length, having defeated the hereditary monarch, its prince assumed the imperial title in 249 B.C. He seems to have survived his triumph only a few months, but his exploits were speedily eclipsed by those of his son, who assumed the title of Tsin-Che-Hoang-te, or "the first grand emperor of the Tsin dynasty." Inspired by the loftiest daring and ambition, he resolved to subjugate all the other states; and after astute preparation and a series of as bloody wars as ever deluged Europe, this Napoleon of China at length ruled

supreme over the whole empire. But his designs were as vast as his ambition was boundless; and no sooner had he restored to his nation its grand unity, and subdued with slaughter the nomade tribes of the north and south, than he resolved to give employment to the millions of men whom the cessation of warfare had thrown idle on the country. It was with this object, not less than as a defence against the Tartars, that he set four or five millions of men (a third of the able-bodied population) to work in constructing the Great Wall, and shut up five hundred thousand soldiers in fortresses, where they were employed in works of utility. He visited all parts of the empire—caused great roads to be made through the more impassable districts — ordered a universal disarmament of the people—drew up a statistical account of all the provinces — again and again went to war, each time extending the limits of the empire—and devoted large sums to the embellishment of his capital. We question if even Europe can show a *Grand Monarque* like this. Strong in the consciousness of his own genius, he contemned the precepts of antiquity which have always been so highly venerated by the Chinese; and to the remonstrances of the Men of Letters he replied, that the old precedents were inapplicable to the new times. Unquestionably he was right,—nothing but an unflinching hand and indomitable will could then have rescued the empire from falling to pieces; but, incensed by his tyranny no less than by his innovations, the whole body of the Men of Letters ranged themselves in opposition to him. For long the Emperor temporised with them; but at length, feeling his power fairly established, and fearing lest his opponents should by-and-by inoculate the people with their sentiments, he resolved to cut up their power by the roots, by commanding, under the penalty of death, that (with a few exceptions) the whole books in the empire should be burnt. The conduct of the Men of Letters, throughout this trying struggle, was in the highest degree patriotic, and several hundreds suffered

death rather than acquiesce in the tyranny of the Emperor. The destruction of the books, and most of the other monuments of the past, shows the imminence of the conflict in which Che-Hoang-te found himself involved. He triumphed for the time; but it is always vain for a single man to contend with the natural predilections of a whole nation; and in sixty years afterwards the interdict against the books was removed, and the people engaged with enthusiasm in the task of recovering their old literature, by carefully searching out all the fragments which had escaped the flames, as well as the many volumes, vases, &c., buried in tombs. The dynasty of the First Great Emperor was even shorter-lived than his political system: his son was dethroned while still a youth, and his crown, contended for by his generals, at length fell to the lot of Leou-pang, who founded the celebrated dynasty of Han. In the case of this great Chinese monarch, as in the case of Alexander, Charlemagne, and Napoleon, we see how difficult it is for a great conqueror to transmit his sword-won empire to his descendants, and how expedient it may be in autocratic states, where the empire rests wholly on the shoulders of one person, that the law of primogeniture (so benefical in its operation in constitutional states) should be dispensed with in order to secure a succession of able sovereigns.

The system of standing armies, which had been introduced by Che-Hoang-te, was continued by the new dynasty, asserting the supremacy of the throne, and extending its sway over the Mongol tribes to the shores of the Caspian. As early as this dynasty, political and commercial relations existed with Western Asia; and the emperors having discovered the channel by which silks were exported, it was resolved to send an ambassador to Rome. But the pusillanimity of the Chinese general to whom this mission was intrusted, marred the whole plan; and thus the mightiest empires of the East and West existed simultaneously without becoming acquainted. Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, indeed, sent an embassy to the country from

which the silks came, and these envoys reached their destination, A.D. 166, but returned without having effected anything. This is not surprising; for the celebrated entrepot where the Chinese and Western merchants met, seems to have been in the narrow pass of Belurtag, in the neighbourhood of the Gihon and Yerghien; and the deserts on the frontiers of China, with their roving robber-tribes, presented almost insurmountable obstacles to an embassy advancing from the West.

The marriage-rite is said to have been introduced among the Chinese by their first king, Fohi; polygamy with its dangerous seductions was adopted so early as by the immediate successors of Hoang-te. The evils of polygamy, however, were aggravated by the monarchs of the Han dynasty raising eunuchs of the Court to important offices in the State. In China, as elsewhere, these men, emasculated in everything save craftiness and ambition, came to exercise a pernicious influence on the government; but, forming an association for mutual aid among themselves, they were the means of ruining many successive dynasties without themselves being displaced. This happened with the line of Han. Feudality lifted up its head again as the government became weak; the empire was sundered into three principalities; and at length the prince of one of them obtained the sovereignty, commencing the dynasty called Tsin*—A.D. 260-416; on the extinction of which China once more became divided into two kingdoms, separated by the broad stream of the Yang-tse-keang. For nearly two centuries afterwards, five families rapidly followed each other on the throne; and, the salutary rule of hereditary succession being constantly violated by the strongest, the whole history of the period is a mere record of contests and crimes. At length, in A.D. 585, the north and south were reunited in one empire; and soon after, Ly-yuen, a celebrated general and statesman, usurped the throne, and founded the martial dynasty of Tang.

* Although the name of this dynasty is pronounced in the same way as that founded by Che-Hoang-te, it is expressed by a different Chinese character.

Those who open their eyes in wonderment at the idea of *a* rebellion in China, will do well to consider this period. The history of the country, from A.D. 262 to 905, is one of anarchy and internal convulsions, during which the empire narrowly escaped dismemberment or extinction from the hordes of Central Asia, who pressed upon the woe-stricken country much about the same time as they began to hurtle against the Roman frontiers in the West. But in the midst of all this misery, when almost every man had to lay down the ploughshare and take up the sword, the money-making spirit of the people still urged on the enterprises of foreign commerce. When the wars between Persia and Rome rendered impracticable the commercial road by Samarcand and Bokhara, the Chinese merchants travelled over Thibet and the Himalaya mountains, and, dropping down the Indus or Ganges, awaited the arrival of the Red Sea fleet, which annually repaired to Guzerat. By-and-by, however, finding a sea-voyage more advantageous, they journeyed in their huge junks round the Malayan peninsula to Ceylon, which then became the principal emporium between the East and West. Such were the commercial relations, when a monk, in the reign of Justinian (*circa* 650), penetrated into China, carried away the eggs of the silkworm in a hollow cane, with the seeds of the mulberry-tree, and thus transferred the manufacture of silk to the Western world. Soon afterwards the Arabs, animated by a proselytising spirit, and fond of adventure, sent in 708 an embassy with valuable presents to China by way of Kashgar. Moreover, following in the wake of the junks, the Arabian navigators reached the Chinese seas; but little success at first attended them, and the exactions upon them became so heavy that most of the Arabs returned to their own country. In spite of all obstacles, however, the trade lingered on, till their fellow-Mohammedans, the Mongols, seized upon China; and thenceforward trade was carried on by the Arabs with tolerable briskness, till the arrival of the Portuguese in 1516, and of the Dutch and English

about a century later, threw the commerce into more enterprising hands.

After five ephemeral dynasties, whose unfortunate reigns occupied the half-century following the fall of the Tangs, the celebrated Soong dynasty mounted the throne. Printing, or rather xylography, which is said to have been invented earlier, was brought into general use in the tenth and eleventh centuries. Literature, which had been greatly neglected during the five or six centuries preceding, flourished again abundantly,—even as the Augustan and Elizabethan ages of literature followed similar periods of convulsion in the history of Rome and England; and the national philosophy assumed that materialistic form which it still retains. But China, which had flourished in its own might for nearly four thousand years, was now about to pass under the yoke of a foreign conqueror. The incursions of the Nomades of the Steppes had been growing more and more formidable; and at length, seeing a child on the Chinese throne, the Mongols under Kublai Khan—one of the wisest as well as most warlike princes that ever swayed an Eastern sceptre—dashed into the empire, took the capital, and sent the young emperor a prisoner into the Shamo desert (A.D. 1276). Great patriotism was exhibited by the vanquished, great severity by the conquerors; and it is recorded that "the blood of the people flowed in sounding torrents." The institutions of the empire were maintained, and Chinese manners adopted by the Mongols: a thing unparalleled in the annals of conquest, and showing at once the excellence of those institutions, and the firm hold which they had on the affections of the people. In order to remedy the infertility of the soil in the vicinity of Peking, Kublai completed the stupendous undertaking of the Grand Canal, which had been commenced under the preceding dynasty; and under him and his successors the Arab merchants enjoyed many privileges, because holding the same creed as the Mongols. But the race of Kublai rapidly degenerated, and before they had reigned in

China for a century, the people, under the ancestor of the Ming dynasty, rose in rebellion (as they are now doing against the Mantchoos) and expelled the Mongols. For nearly three centuries afterwards, the Chinese enjoyed peace under a native dynasty; toleration was proclaimed for all sects alike, and the arrival of the Portuguese introduced some knowledge of the religion and sciences of Europe. The nation, however—like most long-established and highly-civilised states—seems to have been gradually declining in military spirit; so that in 1643 the Mantchoo Tartars, though a mere handful compared to the myriads of China, overran the empire and seized upon the throne. In order to conceal this disparity of numbers, the conquered people were commanded to shave the thick hair, which they had been wont to wear from the earliest times (and which the rebels are now resuming), and to betake themselves to the Tartar fashion of a long plaited tress or tail. In other respects, also, they were compelled to adopt the Tartar habit; but so great was the aversion of the Chinese, that a general revolt broke out, and many preferred death to submission. From that time until now, the government has continued in the hands of the Mantchoos.

Our limits do not permit us to do more than trace the bare outlines of the history of China; but an adequate survey of it would amply refute the common though preposterous notion that this most ancient of empires has undergone no changes since its first establishment. It has beheld its monarchy pass from elective to hereditary—its government from patriarchal to feudal, from feudal to imperial, finally settling into the immovable form of a centralised bureaucracy. It has beheld the unity of the empire broken again and again,—two conquests of the country,—and altogether two-and-twenty dynastic changes, involving almost as many warlike revolutions. It has beheld its religion change from an earnest Deism to Indifferentism, and finally to Materialism. In all these respects time has done its work of change, and Chinese civilisation will

never be properly understood unless those changes are borne in mind. But after all, Time, the destroyer, has been lenient in his dealings with China, and all those revolutions which she has witnessed are nothing to the stupendous overthrows and regenerations of the kingdoms of the West. What has become of the old "universal empires" of Egypt and Assyria, of Persia, and Greece, and Rome,—not one of which ever exceeded in extent that of China eighteen hundred years ago? Have they not perished utterly? and are not even the very inhabitants of those regions now totally different in blood from those of the elder time? Nineveh and Babylon, Baalbek and Palmyra, Susa and Persepolis, the Hundred-gated Thebes, and Memphis, and Petra, once the seats of unrivalled opulence and populousness, have vanished, hardly leaving ruins. The wide plains of Syria and Mesopotamia are strewn with crumbling but gigantic mounds, attesting their former greatness, and the old cities of the Levant have shared in the overwhelming ruin. Tyre is a wretched village; Famia, once the royal nursery of the Seleucidian cavalry, and rearing on its marshes upwards of thirty thousand horses and elephants, now barely supports a few sheep and buffaloes; and not a wall remains of republican Aradus,—of all that multitude of houses, which, says Strabo, had more storeys than those of Rome. They perished all,—and why? Because they were unable to stem the invasions of the Northern hordes. And they perished utterly,—because they could not protect Civilisation against the assaults of the Desert.

Now, the trials which those empires sank under, China withstood. The same assaults were made upon her as upon them; the same hordes of Central Asia which overran the empires of the West and South, had previously been repelled from her frontiers. This may be a humiliating fact for the Caucasian race, but it is not the less a true one; and the explanation of this remarkable circumstance is perhaps more humiliating still. We say truly that the kingdoms of Western Asia and Southern Europe fell in consequence of the corruption

natural to long-established civilisation,—but was not the civilisation of China of a still older date? The real and startling explanation is, that freedom and social vitality then existed in China to a greater extent than elsewhere in the world. The bold and brilliant freemen of Greece and Rome were counted by tens, but their slaves by hundreds. Freedom and energy did not penetrate below the upper classes of society,—all below was slavery and stagnation; and instead of the evil diminishing as time rolled on, the reverse was the case,—the bondmen multiplying while the freemen diminished. Thus there was no strength or vitality left in the people to withstand the rude energy of the Northern hordes, and the invading tribes which they used at one time to repel with immense slaughter triumphed at last, because no soldiers could be raised to oppose them. Such was the fate of the Classic empires—but it was not so in China. There, freedom was equally diffused. There were no castes, and no class-privileges; the whole people stood equal in the eye of the law; slavery, except in individual cases, was unknown, and each man plied the loom or tilled the ground, not for a liege-lord, but for himself. The consequence of this happy condition of affairs was, that industry and patriotism were developed to some extent in all classes of the community; and every man, having a stake in the country, was proportionally willing to sacrifice something for the safety of the empire.

We naturally regard with contempt the military power of the modern Chinese; but we would commit a most grievous mistake were we to suppose that this inaptitude for war characterised all periods of their history. There is a period, or periods, in the history of all States at which the military spirit declines, and this declension may be said to have begun in China some six or seven centuries ago. Consequently, while other nations have been going on inventing new engines and modes of war, the Chinese have not only remained content with their old weapons and methods, but have even forgotten

much of their former knowledge of the art, and neglected still more of it. Their ancient books on war and strategy, as well as the old songs of the country, attest a most martial spirit in the people of former times, as well as great proficiency in the military art. Their very history, indeed, presents indubitable evidence on this point; for, on any other supposition, it is utterly impossible to account for their continued and remarkable successes against the ever-aggressive hordes of the Steppes. In fact, it is all but established that the Mongolian people who overthrew the old Persian empire and established that of the redoubtable Parthians, was a tribe which the Chinese had previously expelled from their own frontiers; and Gibbon assigns to a similar cause the first heave of the mighty wave of invasion which, rolling westwards from the borders of China, finally submerged with its flood the mighty empire of Rome. One by one the tribes of Central Asia dashed against the frontiers of the tempting "Flowery Land," but one by one they were routed; and, driven before the triumphant armies and increasing population of China, horde was rolled back upon horde in dire confusion, till at length the East, in successive swarms, threw itself in mass upon the West. So far from the Chinese having been at all times an unwarlike race, we believe that the military spirit flourished for a longer period among them than among most other nations. Besides the necessity for its exercise, occasioned by the constant assaults from without, the numerous petty strifes between the feudal princes before our era, and the far more dreadful civil contests which ensued during the centuries when the country was severed into rival kingdoms, infused or revived a warlike temper in the people. These intestine conflicts were, on a grand scale, to China what the wars of the Heptarchy, of the Roses, of the Rebellion, &c., were to England, — namely, a means devised by Providence for the regeneration of the people without the interference of any foreign element, which latter would have done its work rather by destroying than by

purifying. They constituted an antiseptic—an antidote to lethargy and corruption; and without some such process as this, kingdoms cannot long exist in their integrity and strength. The purifying fires of affliction are as needful for nations as for individuals. If war is a desolator, it is also a purifier; and it is a narrow mind indeed which can see in this agent of Providence, which has been at work upon the earth from the first birth of the nations, nothing but a child of Chaos and avatar of barbarism.

Many changes, as we have seen, have come over the external aspect of the Chinese government, but, strange to say, the theory of government and the social civilisation of the people have continued unaltered since the earliest times. Twenty-four centuries have elapsed since the principles upon which these are based became stereotyped in the works of Confucius (which for the most part were compilations from works still more ancient), but they had been taught and practically acknowledged for many centuries before that period. The remarkable permanence of these principles in the national mind is to be accounted for, first of all, by their abstract excellence,—secondly, by their being in unison with the peculiar idiosyncrasy of the people,—and, thirdly, by their forming the staple of an education which is most widely diffused throughout the empire. From the earliest times—remarkable and instructive circumstance!—the education of the people was under the special care of the State; and a work written before the Christian era, says Mr Davis, speaks of "the *ancient* system of instruction," which required that every town and village, down to only a few families, should have a common school. Education is not only inculcated by positive precepts, but, as we shall see by-and-by, is encouraged by a competition for the highest honours; and among the countless millions of the empire there are very few indeed who cannot read and write sufficiently for the ordinary purposes of life. The great regard which the Chinese entertain for age, is even secondary to their

respect for learning. "In learning," says one of their maxims, "age and youth go for nothing: the best-informed takes precedence." And wealth itself (though abundantly coveted by the Chinese for the gratifications it supplies) is looked upon with perhaps less respect than in any other country, in consequence of rank and distinction arising almost exclusively from educated talent.

On this all-important matter of Education, the Chinese have followed a course different from all other nations,—(and this is another point which we, with our Education Bills, may do well to consider.) We need hardly say how little the Chinese sympathised with the spirit of mystical speculation, so prevalent in the west of Asia, and which peculiarly characterised the intellectual development of the old empires of the Orient,—but they would even hold in contempt the comparatively practical systems of Europe. From the classic ages to the present time, the great aim of education in Europe, and now also in America, has been to enlarge the *intellect* of man,—to impart to him a knowledge of the physical and metaphysical worlds,—and, as he advances, to enable him to peer into "all mysteries," and scrutinise the workings of nature without and of his spirit within. From the days of Thales and Pythagoras to those of Spinosa and Lamarck, the crowning point of science and philosophy has been the formation of systems more or less speculative, concerning the worlds of matter or of spirit,—and the effect chiefly aimed at was to exalt the human intellect by developing its varied powers. No such educational system found favour with the practical mind of China. The system which has there existed, has been eminently utilitarian, but it is utilitarianism in its best form. It is not of that sort which exhibits itself in those schools among ourselves which style themselves "commercial," whose object is to impart merely those branches of knowledge which are calculated to advance one's material interests, and which may be used against one's fellows as much as for them. On the contrary, Chinese educa-

tion contemplates man even less as an Individual than as a member of Society, and enjoins upon him, by line upon line and precept upon precept, the manifold duties of humanity and courtesy which he owes to his fellow-men. The object of all European systems is to enlarge man's intellect, but that of the Chinese is to mould his habits and affections. "To investigate the principles of things which are hidden from human intelligence," says Confucius,—"to do extraordinary actions which appear above the nature of man,—in fine, to work prodigies in order to procure admirers and followers in the ages to come, that is what I would not do." He reserved all his time and talents for the discovery of moral truth, and spent his life in teaching it to others. In brief, to use the words of one of his disciples, the sum and substance of his doctrine is, "to possess rectitude of heart, and to love one's neighbour as one's self."

"The grand law of duty," says Confucius, "is to be sought for in HUMANITY, that noble virtue of the heart which is the source of love for all men. That humanity is man himself, and friendship for relatives is its first duty. Justice, is to render to every one his due, and its first duty is to give honour to the wise. . . . The most universal duties of mankind are,—the relations which ought to subsist between the sovereign and his ministers, between father and children, between husband and wife, between elder and younger brothers, and the union of friends among themselves. The great and universal moral faculties of man, which allow of his practising these virtues, are,—Conscience, which is the light of intelligence to distinguish between good and evil; humanity, which is rectitude of heart; and moral courage, which is the strength of the soul." Study, with Confucius, was not the mere "getting of knowledge," but an application of the mind to the improvement of the heart. "Study," said he, "is the application of the understanding to the search after the law of duty: he who loves it, is very near to moral science. He who does his best to practise his duties, is very near to that devotion to the happiness of mankind which is

called humanity. He who blushes at his feebleness in the practice of his duties, is very near to the strength of soul necessary for their fulfilment. . . . If the natural inclinations of a man overrule his education, then is he nothing better than an unpolished clown; if, on the contrary, his education override his natural inclinations [among which Confucius includes rectitude and goodness of heart], then is he nothing more than a polite man; but when education and the natural inclinations are in unison and in equal proportions, they form the superior man. . . . The superior man is beneyolent towards all men alike, without egotism, and without partiality. . . . He does not confine himself to perfecting himself, and there stopping, but sets to work to perfect others also. The superior man fixes his thoughts upon virtue, the vulgar man attaches them to the earth; the superior man makes it his business to observe the laws, the vulgar man thinks only of profits. Apply yourself only to gains and profits, and your actions will make many enemies." Such are some of his definitions of the moral law; the following are a few of his precepts: "Do what is right at all times, in all places, in all circumstances. Do good for its own sake, and without motives of personal interest. Be severe to your own faults, but indulgent to those of others. Speak ill of no one. Do not let it afflict us that men do not know us, but rather that we do not know ourselves. Procure for the aged a sweet repose; to friends and relatives maintain unchanging fidelity; on the young and feeble bestow maternal cares. Purify yourself from all stains,—keep far from you all flatterers,—shun the seductions of beauty,—despise riches, esteem highly virtue and those who practise it,—honour your parents,—observe the prescribed rites."

Confucius believed, in the main, that man's inclinations are naturally good, and that he could perfect himself; but this must be taken with some limitations. He held indeed that the "rule of moral conduct has its source in the heart of all men,"—that is, that all men have the Divine monitor con-

science within them; but he was far too able an observer of mankind to suppose that their conduct generally harmonised with its dictates. "Alas!" he says, "I have never yet seen a man who is able to perceive his defects, and who blames himself internally." At another time, "I cannot find a holy man; all I can do is to find a wise one." And the characters engraved on the bath of King Ching-thang said, "Renew thyself completely every day; make yourself *new*, still *new*, always *new*."

A volume of suchlike doctrines and precepts might be extracted from the Canonical Books of the Chinese,—the chief of which are the *Shoo-king* (or Book of Books), and the Four Classics composed by Confucius and his disciples. These works, which are regarded by the Chinese with almost as much reverence as the Bible is by Christians, and which have received the sanction of generations of an immense population, form the basis of the public law; they have been explained and commented on by the most celebrated moralists and philosophers; and they are continually in the hands of all those who, while they wish to cultivate their intellect, desire also to possess a knowledge of those grand moral truths which make the prosperity and happiness of human societies. No one can peruse those monuments of Chinese antiquity without being profoundly astonished at the lofty reason and eminently pure morality which breathe throughout them; and if we turn from the rules of social to the precepts of political morality therein enshrined, we will find equal cause for admiration. The exercise of sovereignty is regarded solely as the religious fulfilment of a heavenly mission for the benefit of all. Moral limits are set to this power; and should the sovereign transgress them, then (as the celebrated philosopher Tshoo-hee, who lived in the twelfth century of our era, says in his commentary, which is taught in all the schools and colleges of the empire) the people would be disengaged from their allegiance, would overturn his power, and replace him by one who would rule legitimately,—that is to say, solely for the good of all.

Its elaborate enforcement of etiquette is another point, also, in which the educational system of the Chinese presents a peculiarity well worthy of attention. From the earliest times, the great aim of their rulers and sages was, to govern the mind through the body,—to regulate the internal emotions of the people by the gentle influence of external habits. They observed that, the tempers and dispositions of all being different, something was requisite to harmonise such opposite characters, and with this view they instituted the *Le*, or rules of propriety in relation to external conduct. Confucius, a perfect sublimation of the national character, perfected the system thus commenced; and the Book of Rites, compiled by him, furnishes a most complete and rigid manual of national etiquette.

It will thus be seen that the people and statesmen of China are trained on a plan unlike any pursued in Europe. With us, the great subject of education is Knowledge, with the Chinese it is Morality. The moral and social lessons which, with us, are left to be taught in private, or to be acquired by experience of actual life, are made the first step, and fundamental principle of training in China. They prepare the youth for being a good man and good member of society, and place science only in a secondary rank. So also in regard to statesmen. Those of China are doubtless very much behind the better class of European statesmen in general knowledge, but we question if they are not superior to most of them in the practical management of men; and certainly no officials in the world are better trained in the principles, though not in the forms, of what we call constitutional government.

There is an engaging simplicity in the Chinese theory of government. Still adhering to the patriarchal principle (which has so long ago given way to the feudal, monarchical, or republican in other quarters), they regard the whole nation as one family, of which the sovereign is the responsible head. If the people are happy, it is attributed to his wisdom and goodness,

—if they are discontented or in want, it is held owing to his incapacity or oppression; and the same principles apply to every subordinate ruler in regard to the population over which he is placed. In accordance with that thoroughly practical cast of mind which characterises the natives of China, their government judges of the merit of its officials by the success which attends their administration. It knows that a man of ability can almost always put things to rights in his district; and a sentence of removal or degradation of the governor is certain to follow continued discontent or disaster in any part of the empire.

It will naturally be asked, What was the religious system which gave birth to a morality so pure? This brings us at once to the knottiest point of all connected with Chinese civilisation, and one of peculiar interest at the present moment, in consequence of the religious innovations promulgated by the leaders of the Rebellion. Some writers deny that China has a religion of its own at all,—others assert that it is a mere political fiction, invented for the better government of the people. Some affirm the Chinese to be Deists, others Atheists,—some Materialists, others Idolaters and superstitious. These extraordinarily diverse statements are susceptible of a much more perfect fusion than it is possible at first to imagine; and their diversity is very much owing to inaccurate information and inadequate reflection. In order fully to apprehend the religious system of China, we must ascend the stream to its source,—scan carefully the moral aspect of the nation,—and then, retracing our steps, watch the various modifications which have, more or less perceptibly, supervened. Unless we do this, we shall not only fail in obtaining a satisfactory view of the subject, but shall probably find ourselves committing as great a mistake as if we were to judge of the religion of France in the days of Clovis by what it had become in the middle of last century.

Turning back, then, to the reigns of Yao and Shun, by which

time Chinese history had assumed an authentic form, we find the people acknowledging and reverencing the true God under the title of the "Supreme Ruler." According to the patriarchal principle, the worship of this exalted Being was confined to the Emperor, as the head of the nation; and the high sacrifices were performed on the summits of certain mountains, such places being probably selected as the natural altars of the earth. The offerings seem to have been, not expiatory, but of the thanksgiving kind, consisting chiefly of the fruits of the earth; and the whole worship resembled in many points, and especially in its absence of idols, that of the ancient Persians, as described by Herodotus. Their ideas of God did not possess that individualism and personality which so remarkably characterised those of the Hebrews; yet their "Supreme Ruler" was no mere abstraction like the Deity of Buddhism, seated on his passionless throne of the Void, and far above all interest in sublunary things. On the contrary, the early Chinese most properly regarded God as regulating by his Providence all the affairs of earth and men,—raising up and pulling down dynasties, and sending blessings and calamities upon individuals according to the rectitude or viciousness of their lives. "Although the Shoo family," says the *Ta-Hio*, "long possessed a royal principality, it obtained from Heaven a new investiture. . . . The mandate of Heaven which gives the sovereignty to a man, does not always confer it on him for life. . . . Before the princes of the dynasty of Chang lost the affection of the people, they might have been compared to the Most High; and we may consider, from their case, that the mandate of Heaven is not easy to preserve." The *Book of Verses* says,—"Respect the majesty of Heaven, and you will conserve the mandate it has delegated to you." The *Shoo-king* says,—"Heaven, in creating mankind, has set over them princes, and given them institutions." Confucius says,—"There are three things which the superior man reveres—the decrees of Heaven, great men, and the words of saints. Common men do not know the decrees

of Heaven, and consequently do not revere them." "If I have acted wrong," said the same sage on one occasion, "may Heaven reject me." "The superior man," says Mencius, "does not murmur at Heaven, nor complain of men. . . . If a prince abandon his time to vicious pleasures, he will inevitably draw down upon himself great calamities; but, as the *Book of Verses* says, 'If the prince thinks constantly of conforming himself to the mandate he has received from Heaven, he will obtain for himself many happinesses.'" No unprejudiced reader can peruse such passages (and hundreds more might be given) without acknowledging that they contain a distinct recognition of a Supreme Ruler and a Divine Providence.

All religions are tolerated; but it is a curious fact, that although various creeds—Taouism and Confucianism, Buddhism and the religion of Mohammed—have at different times found favour with the Emperors, nevertheless the State religion has continued for ever the same. This permanence does not, as in most other countries, attach to it as a Divine institution, —it is of human invention, and is known to be so; but it affords a vent to the natural superstitious feelings of the people, and serves also to exaggerate the power of the Emperor by grounding it to some extent upon the sanctions of religion. It can hardly be doubted, too, that the worship of ancestors has, during the later eras of scepticism, been encouraged and continued by the State, not merely because in harmony with the peculiar spirit of the people, but as a means of guarding against innovation, and of inducing men, by the prospect of posthumous honours, to become good subjects and benefactors of society.

The following is a synopsis of the State Religion. There is no established priesthood,—the old patriarchal principle being still maintained in religion as in their other institutions; and the Emperor, as the father of his people, acts as their high priest, and offers up sacrifices for himself and for the nation at large. In robes of azure, he worships the sky; robed in yel-

low, he offers sacrifices to the earth; dressed in red, he adores the sun,—in pale white, the moon. His nobles and ministers attend him in full court-dress; and entering with them the great Temple of Imperial Ancestors, he sacrifices to the memory of his imperial predecessors, who, like himself, were deemed "sons of heaven." Heaven, Earth, and the Imperial Ancestors, are the only powers in the universe reckoned superior to the Emperor, and their worship, constituting the "greater sacrifices," is restricted to him alone; the "medium" and "lesser" sacrifices, embracing as their objects the elements, genii, and sages, are not so restricted. The principal offerings are silk; but the victims immolated in the higher sacrifices consist of oxen, sheep, and pigs,—which must be whole and sound; and, if possible, of a black colour. To do the Celestial Emperors justice, the great majority of them endeavour to fulfil their heavy duties to the best of their ability. But only consider what it is to be father and high priest to four hundred millions of human beings! Such a potentate, if at all of an anxious temperament, can scarcely have a moment of even ordinary satisfaction. A deficiency of the circulating medium, a bad season, an inundation, an epidemic, and suchlike miseries, are ever turning up to disturb his peace of mind, and literally "set him to his prayers." Old Taou-kwang, the late Emperor, was quite a pattern in this respect. "He was absent on no festive occasion," says Mr Gutzlaff, and in China *festive* and *religious* are synonymous adjectives; "and especially when threatened calamities seemed to be near at hand, he was very careful in the performance of his duties. If no rain had fallen for many months, he might be seen in sackcloth, like a common penitent, approaching the idols, imploring them to look down upon the nation for whom he interceded. He went through the regular fastings and preparations; and, not to be behind, he often appeared at the altar to perform the duties of a high priest." One may smile at these things; but it is a lesson even for Christians of all degrees, to see a heathen potentate over-

whelmed in cares, and burdened with the turmoil of a constant and all-important occupation, yet always finding time and heart for those rites and austerities by which he hopes to please Heaven and benefit his people.

This religion, indeed, does not seem to have been the only one in ancient China; and amidst the shadows of the semi-historic times there is discernible a struggle between it and another, and possibly preceding one, which seems to have been a mingled system of Sabæism and natural magic. A like struggle is recorded to have taken place also in other parts of ancient Asia,—as in India on the advent of the Brahminical race, in Persia on the rise of the Zoroastrian faith, and even Egypt and Chaldea seem not to have been exempt from similar religious innovations. But in China, as elsewhere, the struggle was so early, and the triumph of the latter system so complete, that nothing but the vaguest traces are left of the previous order of things. By the time of the Emperor Hoang-te, when the established chronology of China begins, the change was complete; and we read that during his reign the relations between the Creator and his creature man were recognised, and that a monument was then constructed specially for the offering of sacrifices to the Supreme Sovereign (Shang-te). It was this same monarch who first introduced into the government the religious or theocratic element, which has ever since distinguished the Imperial system of China. Having previously appointed yellow as the royal colour (which it still continues to be), he discarded the title of King, which all his predecessors had borne, and adopted that of *Hoang-te*, or the Yellow Sovereign,—thereby intimating, by a parallelism of titles, that he regarded himself as the earthly representative of the *Shang-te*, or Supreme Sovereign. We must not suppose from this, however, that the "divine right of kings," as that phrase was understood a century ago in Europe, was ever acknowledged by the Chinese. On the contrary, the sanctity was attributed to the office, not to the man; and not only were worthless sovereigns deposed without

scruple in the centuries preceding our era, but Heaven itself, as we have seen, was believed to withdraw from them its "mandate,"—or, in other words, the commission which it had conferred on them of governing the nation.

The immortality of the soul, however denied at times by the Men of Letters, has been in all ages practically recognised by the Chinese nation; and along with the Supreme Ruler they have always worshipped genii of the elements and the spirits of departed men. With those spirits it was anciently believed that a communication could be kept up; and in the dawn of their history, the son of the Emperor Hoang-te is said to have founded a system of magic. Among the earliest written characters invented by the Chinese, is one representing, not a priest, but a magician, whose self-assumed office it probably was to carry on this spiritual intercourse, acting in short as a "medium," and by incantations and suchlike processes to send the genii to his service. We are also informed that there used to be persons who lived apart in mountains, in order that, by means of undisturbed contemplation, they might attain to the power of holding free converse with those shadowy beings.

We make a present of these facts to our "spirit-rapping" friends on the other side of the Atlantic,—and briefly commend them to the notice of the general public as a curious instance how epochs the most apart, and civilisations the most dissimilar, often concur in producing the same remarkable phenomena. In truth, alike in science, politics, and philosophy, the deep student of history ever finds more and more how much truth there is in the saying of the Hebrew Sage,—that "there is nothing new under the sun."

Mysticism, in fact, has prevailed even among the unimaginative Chinese, and from its ranks proceeded the lesser of the two great master-spirits whom the nation has produced. This was Lao-keun,—called also Laô-tse, or the "old infant," from a legend which says he was born with white hair,—who, in the character of his intellect, belongs rather to the mysticism of

India than to the rationalistic spirit of the race of Han. The God invoked by the ancient Chinese is, as we have seen, the Supreme Ruler (Shang-te) or Heaven (Tien); but the Deity described by Lao-tse is the Supreme universal Reason (Tao), and the attributes he assigns to Him are identical with those assigned to the Supreme Being by all the spiritualist *doctrinaires* of the East, as well as in many respects by Spinoza and the Pantheists. His doctrines, however, never took hold of the mind of the nation, and have now degenerated into a system of magic, professed by the Taouists, or "disciples of Reason."

Very different from the mystical abstractions of this sage were the eminently practical ethics of his well-known rival Confucius,—born about 550 B.C., fifty years later than Lao-keun, and nearly contemporary with Pythagoras. His doctrines constitute a system of morals and politics rather than any particular religious creed. He said little about the being and attributes of the Deity, as he found reason a very inadequate guide on this subject; and although some expressions in his sayings show that he believed in the existence of genii and *manes*, he may be rather said not to have interfered with the common belief and worship than to have expressly adopted them. However interesting it might be to give a synopsis of the teaching of this eminent sage, whose writings we have carefully examined, our limits will not permit of the attempt. We must content ourselves with calling attention to this remarkable fact, that unlike any other civilised people in the world, the religion (or rather the moral system) of the Chinese is not based upon a real or feigned Divine Revelation, but is deduced from human reason itself. No Divine Revelation was ever granted to them, and no fanatic or impostor ever arose to feign one. But if God did not speak from without, he spoke from within. The Chinese took close counsel with his vicegerent Conscience, and to the deep attention with which they listened to its monitory whispers, is to be attributed the marvellous purity of their moral code, which approaches far more nearly

than that of other nations the Divine precepts of the New Testament. The Revelation from *without* is only meant as a supplement to the Revelation which God has given of himself *within*, and to all mankind, in the soul. And of this latter guide the Chinese have probably made as good use as frail human nature is capable of doing.

Thus no distinct form of religion was indigenous to China; but a foreign faith, in the shape of Buddhism, made its way into the country about sixty years after the birth of our Saviour. In consequence of a dream of the Emperor Ming-te that the Holy One was born in the West, ambassadors were despatched in that direction; and these envoys, having encountered the priests of Buddhism coming from India, proclaiming an incarnate God, took them to be the disciples of the true Christ, and presented them as such to their countrymen. Although the majority of the Chinese profess no religion—never say, "I am a Buddhist, or Taouist"—and mark their predilections by donations only, it is evident that Buddhism has proved a greater favourite with the nation than the doctrines of Lao-keun, and is almost as prevalent among the lower orders as Confucianism among the higher. Its leading features are, a total subjection of all passions by means of a contemplative life,—and the metempsychosis, of which the wished-for end is absorption into or reunion with the Divine Essence. But in China the creed lost some of its stupendous absurdities, and had to accommodate itself in many things to the business-like character of the people. It seems to have adopted some things from the Nestorian Christians, who at an early period gained a transient footing in China, but at the same time it easily lent itself to encourage the popular superstitions which seem in all ages to have abounded among the inhabitants. In truth, of all pagans the Buddhists are the least bigoted,—neither among their myriad idols are there any obscene representations, nor do they celebrate any kind of orgies. In allowing Chinese Buddhism these negative merits,

we have pronounced all the praise that is due to it. The generality of the priests wear an expression approaching to idiocy, and their indolence (they do little but beg) and their celibacy are totally opposed to the industrious spirit and philoprogenitive tendencies of the Chinese. An endless repetition of prayers in the Fan or Pali language (for the most part unintelligible even to the priests) is accounted by them the most powerful talisman in life, and the best preparation for futurity. And so indistinct are their ideas of divine things, and so little care they what their followers worship, that on one occasion, says Mr Gutzlaff, "Napoleon's marble bust enjoyed the honour of being placed as an idol" in one of their temples.

In the reign of Che-hoang-te, Confucianism, as we have seen, received a check which threatened at the time to prove fatal. The ambitious and gigantic schemes of the "first grand Emperor," as well as the exigencies of his times, rendered him inflexibly hostile to so influential a rival power in the State as the Men of Letters, and to so unaccommodating and constitutional a system of government as that which they inculcated; and on this account, probably, more than from individual predilection, he proscribed Confucianism, and set up Taouism in its place. In the following century however, the old State-creed regained its influence; but in the long intestine wars which followed the fall of the Han dynasty, and the sundering of the Empire into rival States, its humane and patriotic precepts were but little attended to. At the close of this long period of tumult and retrogression, the Soong dynasty mounted the throne, in somewhat similar circumstances to the Tudor family in England;, and under them, as in the Elizabethan epoch, literature attained its golden age in China. The old educational institutions of the empire were revived, knowledge once more became the sole pathway to eminence and power; and the national philosophy, so far as China can be said to have one, became fixed in that materialistic form which it has ever since retained. All things in the universe, said these

philosophers, have one and the same kind of existence. The clod of the valley, and the ox and man who till it, are in being and essence the same. An object exhibiting extension, colour, and form, is in common parlance called body or matter; when we perceive in it a power of motion, we call it an animal or living being; and when we think we see in it feeling, will, thought, and perception, we call it man, and ascribe to it a soul or spirit. But between these, said they, there is no real and essential difference: they all participate equally in one and the same existence. And this existence, they add, is infinite and unchangeable. Everything is eternal. What we call production and destruction is nothing more than the change which happens to an object when we turn our eyes upon it, or look away: in the former case it certainly produces a new impression on our mind, but no real change takes place in the object itself,—only from being unperceived, it becomes perceived. Some of these philosophers likened the relation between man and universal matter to that existing between statues and the metal out of which they are cast. These statues, they said, so lifelike, and so unlike that shapeless mass of ore, are yet portions of it, were made out of it, and will be melted into it again. Even so is it, they add, with Man. He is just a certain form of matter, substantially differing from it in nothing, and returning and sinking into the universal mass again.

These doctrines exactly correspond with the pernicious system of materialism so beautifully developed a century ago by Helvetius in his *Système de la Nature*. Both deny the existence of spirit, and consequently deny that there either is or can be a God, and impute the formation of the universe and all that it contains, from a sun to a grain of sand, from inanimate dust to breathing man, to the wonderfully-working powers of self-existent matter. Indeed, the new school of philosophy which sprang into existence during the Soong dynasty corresponds most closely with the infidel school of the Encyclopedists

in France; and it would doubtless have wounded the Diderots and D'Alemberts in their tenderest part—namely, in their pride of intellect—to have known that their boasted scepticism and pseudo-discoveries in philosophy had all been anticipated eight centuries before by the despised Chinese! It is also remarkable that as, in both these countries, the promulgation of such doctrines was too sure an indication of a lamentable falling away in respect to religious faith and moral practice, so in both a terrible national retribution followed,—China being soon after bathed in blood by the conquest of the Mongol invaders, and France by the furious excesses of her own children.

It must not be supposed, however, that this atheistic materialism ever took root among the lower orders, who in China constitute the great mass of its people. It is only the seductions of a vain knowledge that can thus blind men to the existence of Power superior to himself. Ignorance errs less grievously, because it leaves the natural instincts of the soul in darkness indeed, but not eradicated. A nation must worship something; and so the great mass of the Chinese went on sacrificing as before to the genii and the souls of the departed. But, although perfect believers in the immortality of the soul, they neither pray to the spirits of the departed for aid, like the Roman Catholics, nor stand in awe of their maleficent powers, like the Hindoos. Their ideas of the state of the departed resemble more nearly those of the ancient Greeks. They look upon Hades as a joyless world, and they talk of a man "going to wander among the genii" (*i. e.*, dying) in the same desponding way as an ancient Greek did of some unsepultured one, who had departed to join the troop of shivering ghosts on the banks of Styx. They believe that the ghosts are still subject, or fancy themselves so, to the feelings of want and hunger; and the friends or relatives of the departed are in the habit of burning pieces of gilt paper in the shape of coin, with the view of transmitting money to supply their wants in the world of shadows. They make sacrifices to the genii, but

they do not venerate them very highly,—for cases are said to be not unfrequent where the statues of the genii have been "publicly whipped, and their names erased from the list" of those to be worshipped, when they did not faithfully and loyally fulfil the duties of their station! Nevertheless the poor genii have at times their reward; and during a recent war with the Borderers in the south, the Emperor, upon the report of the general in command, decreed a votive tablet of brass to two genii who, it was supposed, had made themselves of service to the Imperial troops!

A monarchical spirit has from the earliest times pervaded the Government of China; but after the destruction of the feudal princes and nobles in the long civil wars that intervened between the fall of the Han dynasty and the rise of the Soongs, a further development of the Executive took place, and a centralised bureaucracy established itself upon the ruins of all local authority. The Emperor is styled the "Son of Heaven," and is worshipped with divine honours, in virtue of his office. By immemorial custom, he has absolute control over the succession to the throne, and can select an heir, if he pleases, from beyond the circle of his own family. As the "father of the nation," he is sole proprietor of the soil. He has a Privy Council, composed of two Chinese and two Tartars, and a number of Boards preside over the various branches of administration, and consult with him on all points of difficulty or importance. A remarkable feature in the Government is the Office of Censors, the members of which are despatched to various parts of the empire as Imperial inspectors. By the ancient custom of the country, these censors are privileged to present any advice or remonstrance to the sovereign without losing their lives; nevertheless, they are sometimes degraded and punished when their addresses are more than usually unpalatable. From the Emperor downwards, a strictly-defined gradation of offices extends, passing through ministers of state, governors of provinces, of districts, of towns, down to the head of a family, who is the

absolute and almost irresponsible ruler of his own household, and who is in some degree liable to punishment for their crimes, at any period of their lives, as well as to reward for their merits. The Mandarins are never permited to gather around them the affections of their districts. They are never allowed to hold office in their native locality; and the short time they remain in any one place sufficiently guards the Emperor against the growth of any rival power.

The system of Centralisation is the only form of government possible in a country like China; and (as with every other form of government) its evils are aggravated when it is applied to a vast extent of territory, and when no landed nobility exist to form a check upon the conduct of the Government officials. The latter of these evils is felt in France, the former in the vast territories of Russia, but both are experienced in the still larger dominions of China. There the multitude of officials, and the distance at which many of them are placed from the central power, renders anything like adequate supervision impossible. The power of the officials is practically almost unlimited over those below them; and fraud, tyranny, and extortion find vent despite the highly just and constitutional principles of Chinese government. These are not so much defects of the system as of the individuals who work it; and this truth is by no means overlooked by the people. Local *émeutes* against the authorities are not unfrequent in China; but it is the abuses of power only against which the people protest on such occasions, not its form. They admire and venerate with their whole heart the governmental system of their country, which is not only an elaborate machine associated with their entire past history, but which adapts itself admirably to the national spirit. It is no mere theoretical constitution, struck off at a blow, such as have lately been so much in vogue in Europe; it is a perfect embodiment of the Chinese predilections in government, and has grown with the growth and strengthened with the strength of the people. "A revolution," says

Mr Wade, "would but transfer the present form of government to other hands, as the Chinese are unacquainted with the nature and merits of any other, and complain neither of the present mode of government, nor of the laws, in which they are not stated to discern any defects, but simply of the abuse of them."

In China there are no hereditary nobles or privileged classes. All are equal. The path to distinction is open to all, and is often trode by the humblest cottar's son. Rank can only be attained in the service of the State; and the whole *employés* of Government are selected from the State-endowed schools and colleges of the Empire—from those who, whether poor or rich, distinguish themselves most at the triennial and other examinations. Such are the class of *Lettrés*, or men of letters, from whose ranks the myriad government appointments are filled; and these offices, as we have said, form one vast system of centralised bureaucracy, extending from Peking to furthest Cashgar and Thibet. "Every one of my prefects," said Napoleon I., "is a little emperor;" and even in France at the present day, with all our appliances of railroads and telegraphs, the central Executive finds it impossible to prevent many abuses of power on the part of its provincial representatives. But France is little bigger than a single province of China—which latter empire embraces an extent of territory nearly equal to the whole of Europe, and includes no less than 400,000,000 souls, or more than a third of the whole human race! Imagine, then, the difficulty of governing such a country, and supervising so many myriads of officials, many of whom are distant from the seat of government thousands of miles.

To rule such an empire, of course, requires a singularly able and energetic man. And the first Emperors of each dynasty are generally men of this kind. Prowess and worth have raised them to the throne, and they put forth their whole abilities in a resolute discharge of their office. Dynasties, however, grow old, as well as individuals, and become effete under the enervating influences of wealth and power. Long

experience has shown, in China as in other empires, that the energetic founders of a dynasty are by-and-by succeeded by men who give themselves up to pleasure,—betaking themselves to the harem, and resigning the reins of government in many cases to crafty and ambitious eunuchs—a class of men who, as we have seen, have proved the bane of almost every dynasty for the last sixteen centuries. No sooner does incompetency or corruption begin at Court, than its effects are immediately apparent in a general dissolution of government throughout the Empire. Once remove the firm check of despotic supervision from a Chinese official, and in nineteen cases out of twenty he instantly commences a system of extortion. He wrings fines and takes bribes from all and sundry, and, to prevent appeal, he bribes also the officials immediately above him (just as is done in the dominions of the Czar). In this way the minds of the people become wholly estranged from the Government. Industry is checked, and corruption embezzles the revenue. The imperial exchequer becomes empty; and in order to replenish it, instead of curing the evil by reforming the abuses, the easier plan is generally had recourse to of instituting *sales of rank*—which is synonymous, also, with sales of office. This only aggravates the evil. First of all, the people are justly incensed by seeing what ought to be the rewards of worth and learning only, taken from open competition and given to mere wealth; and secondly, the men thus unjustly placed in rank and office are in general incompetent to the discharge of their duties; and moreover, having *paid* for their appointments, they naturally seek to get a good return for their money, and look upon those under them rarely in any other light than as so many sheep to be fleeced. Thus the evil goes from bad to worse. Industry is checked, government paralysed, the executive powerless. As a natural consequence of the misery of the country, bands of robbers arise in the provinces, which the Imperialist forces are unable to put down. By-and-by these robber-bands attain consistency: some able chief puts

himself at their head, and, encouraged by the feebleness and contempt into which the Government has fallen, hoists the standard of rebellion—issues proclamations denouncing the Emperor as having violated the "decrees of Heaven," and inflicted misery upon the people, and declaring him unfit any longer to reign. A reform of the existing abuses is at the same time made by the rebel chief, and the necessity is inculcated of a return to the ancient morals and principles of government, as laid down in the canonical books, and exemplified in the reigns of many of their earlier sovereigns.

The present rebellion, however unpromising its aspect, may take a similar course. The effeteness of this Mantchoo dynasty is rendered more than usually intolerable by the fact that they are of foreign extraction; and it is more than probable that they will be ejected from the throne, precisely as their Tartar predecessors were by the rebellion four centuries ago, headed by the founder of the native dynasty of Ming. Whether China is to emerge from the struggle a still united empire,—or to resolve itself into two great kingdoms, as it did for several centuries once before, with the broad stream of the Yangtsekeang for their boundary, and with Nanking (the old and natural capital of the empire, from whence the seat of government was transferred to Peking by Kublai Khan, in order to be nearer to his Tartar allies) as the metropolis of the southern kingdom,—or finally, whether it is to be for a time split up into a number of separate states, as it was in the days of Confucius, only with municipal and democratic institutions in place of the now wholly obsolete ones of feudalism,—will depend entirely upon the amount of power possessed by the chief of the insurgents. But whether the empire continue united or not, the Chinese are so thoroughly homogeneous and *clannish* a race that they will ever hold together in bonds of strong national sympathy.

No one will wonder at the emigrating spirit which has of late years shown itself among the Coolies, or lower orders in China, if he bear in mind that the most common evil to which

the Chinese are subject is that crowning misery, starvation. The population is extremely dense; the means of subsistence, in ordinary times, are seldom above the demand; and, consequently, the least failure of the rice-crop produces utter wretchedness amongst hundreds of thousands of the people. Dreadful disorders, in such circumstances, arise, which even the strongest Government would be inadequate to repress. A total change seems to take place in the peaceful nature of the people, and many a patient labourer turns fiercely upon his rich neighbour, to plunder his substance. "No one," says Gutzlaff,* "can have any idea of the anarchy which, on such occasions, ensues, and the utter demoralisation of the people. Yet, as soon as relief is afforded, and a rich harvest promises fair, the spirit of order again prevails, and outrages are put a stop to. The people then combine, arm themselves, and proceed in thousands to catch marauders like wild beasts. No mercy is shown on such occasions, and the Mandarins, on account of their weakness, cannot interfere." This is just a very effective species of Lynch law; and it is not a little instructive to remark how this system has arisen alike in the United States and in China — amidst the youngest of the Anglo-Saxon, and the oldest of the Mongolian branches—from the same cause, namely, the weakness of the executive government.

Owing to the geographical peculiarities of China, one of the most frequent causes of famine is the overflowings of its great rivers. Twelve years ago, the Yellow River and the Yangtse-keang burst their embankments, and inundated to a frightful extent the level country through which they flow, and which is the very garden of China. "The rains have been falling for forty days," says a memorial to the Emperor, "until the rivers, and the sea, and the lakes, and the streams, have joined in one sheet over the land for several hundred *li* [three *lis* are equal to one English mile], and there is no outlet by which the

* *Life of Taou-kwang*, 113.

waters may retire." In the province of Hupih alone, says the Padre Marzetti, a district 230 miles long by 80 broad was under water, and in two of its larger cities the damage done amounted to between three and four millions sterling. Woo-chang-foo, the capital of the province, "fared no better;" while the smaller towns fared infinitely worse; ten thousand people were destroyed, and domestic animals drowned in untold numbers; crowds even of the first families were begging bread; and (horror of horrors to the pious Celestials!) coffins were floating about everywhere on the face of the waters. Such an inundation is too stupendous for the European mind adequately to comprehend its extent, and is said to have exceeded any similar disaster in China within the memory of the present generation.

The Emperor and his Court did their utmost to alleviate the widespread distress. Taxes were remitted, gratuitous distributions of grain made from the public stores, and subscriptions for the sufferers opened throughout the empire. Nevertheless these appliances fell far short of remedying the evils, and many governors of provinces sought to conceal their incapacity by a timely resignation. "Your servant," says one styled Woo-wan-yung, in his memorial to the Emperor, "has set up altars in all places; and, followed by his subordinates, has gone hither and thither, sacrificing early and late, shedding bitter tears, and crying aloud for grief; but he has been unable to succour the afflicted." If he had been cutting drains and building dikes, it would have been more to the purpose. "Shuddering and bewildered," proceeds the luckless Governor, humbly speaking of himself in the third person, "at his meals, he cannot swallow his food; during the night, as he hears the rain falling, he wanders about his dwelling. He knows not what measures to adopt, and beats his breast at his own incompetency." This is all very fine; but we think the rescript of the Vermillion Pencil must have astonished him. The Emperor very coolly writes back that "Woo-wan-yung's despatch

is the extreme of stupidity, absurdity, and audacity! He has had the sense only to accuse himself of a fault, but has not thought of discharging his duty to the utmost. If, whenever there were a season of difficulty, all those upon whom devolves the personal charge of our dominions were to act like Woo-wan-yung, what would become of the misery to which the myriads and tens of myriads of the black-haired race are exposed?" The luckless Governor is then deprived of his button, but ordered to remain at his post—with the assurance, that if he is successful, he may yet in some measure atone for his transgression. "But if it again appears," says the Emperor, "that he does not know how to exert himself, and that his administration is, after all, so unsuccessful as to send the people wandering to the streams and ditches [to drown themselves?], his crimes will of course be severely dealt with. When Our word has once gone forth, the law follows it; and We shall assuredly not allow the least mercy to be shown him. Tremble and attend! Respect this!"*

Old Taou-kwang, who reigned at that time, was a sad miser. He could never be got to put his hands in his own pocket to pay his expenses; and, among other similar eccentricities, he used to confer the repairing of his palaces, as a special mark of his regard, on some favoured courtier! Inundations, accordingly, and suchlike costly disasters, grieved him exceedingly; so that he adopted the notable plan (but not very original one, either in China or in Europe) of raising money by sales of rank. The result of the measure has naturally been, to increase the evil it was meant to cure. Mercenary or incompetent men got into the Government offices, whose embezzlements rendered fresh sales of rank necessary; then more embezzlements; and so the mischievous system goes on. Incapacity, therefore, is very prevalent among the Chinese officials; but, bad as this is, their corrup-

* See Mr WADE'S *Notes on the Condition and Government of the Chinese Empire in* 1849 (chiefly from the *Peking Gazette*). Hong-Kong, 1850.

tion and corruptibility is a still more formidable evil. Their main science of government seems to be,—to give bribes to all above them, and to receive bribes from all below them. In truth, the Government offices, from Peking to Thibet, are one vast hive of peculators. Take *one* province and *one* excise department as a sample. In Shantung the salt-tax should yield a fixed revenue of £40,000; but the arrears in 1849 amounted to nearly £30,000, of which £22,000 was interest due on collections from 1844 to 1848. "An inquiry, under the auspices of a High Commissioner, resulted," says Mr Wade, "in the arrest of the present governor of the province, four ex-governors, his predecessors, and eight ex-directors of the Gabelle, accused of collusion with the salt monopolists, and general abuse of their trust. . . . . The Minister of Finance was also implicated." The governor of Shan-si was exiled in the early part of the same year, on account of the extortion of a relative of his, and others in the province; but his misdeeds were so eclipsed by the rapacity of his successor, that he was recalled and promoted. Similar instances of peculation might be endlessly multiplied; and in a recent decree the Emperor even threatened to send his Lords of the Treasury "to the Board of Punishments, who will make strict inquiry, and, upon proof of the facts, award the proper penalties. . . . . Governors-general and governors guilty of previous connivance at, or subsequent suppression of, such acts, shall be treated with the utmost rigour." In China, not even a transit of Government goods from one place to another can take place, without those in charge making the most of their opportunity. Thus the supply of copper for the Imperial mint, despatched in the beginning of 1848 from Yun-nan in the south-west, had not reached Peking by the end of 1849!—the real cause of the delay being the avarice of the officials in charge, who profitably employed their leisure in laying fees upon such boats as they met or overtook, upon the pretext that they were obstructing the passage of the Government vessels. Indeed, so prevalent is

this predilection for fraud and dishonesty, that the issue of licences, or the payment of a sum, is usually guaranteed to take place in open court, "to prevent any extortion on the part of the clerks and runners."

Foreigners, who know nothing about the internal state of the Chinese empire, are apt to imagine that there reigns unbroken peace; but nothing is more erroneous, or, in truth, more opposed to the natural condition of an empire so vast. Under the oppression of the greedy Mandarins, and other causes—such as dearth and demagogues,—insurrections of villages, cities, and districts are of frequent occurrence, without in any great degree affecting the stability of the Government. In these cases, the destruction of property and the hostility of the people to their rulers (especially if these have been tyrants) is often carried to great excess, and instances are on record of the infuriated mob broiling their magistrates over a slow fire. On the other hand, the Government, when victorious, knows no bounds to its cruelty, and the treatment of political prisoners is of the most shocking description. Fear is the great parent of cruelty in all parts of the world, and it ought to be confessed that the Mandarins have good grounds for apprehensions. There is an immense Chinese rabble ready to seize every opportunity to commit ravages upon industrious citizens, and to plunder the Governmental stores; and they never fail to do so whenever the attention of the Mandarins is directed to the defence of the country, or when they are beaten in the field. This was frequently exemplified during the war with this country; for whenever our troops captured a city, the mob completely plundered the houses, taking away even doors and window-frames.

The Chinese have a saying in their language, that "a mob of people is more dangerous than a troop of wild beasts;" and their manner of dealing with these popular demonstrations is very curious: the police have strict orders never to interfere, as they conceive that difficulties are more likely to arise from meddling, than benefits to accrue from suppressing them by force. "There

was an extraordinary instance of this at Canton, only a few years ago," says Lord Jocelyn,* "when the opposition to the opium-trade first broke out. The people refused to admit the soldiers to search their houses, and, forming themselves into parties or trades, barricaded the streets. The Government immediately gave in, and the military made no further attempts at the time." "Everybody who has travelled in China," says Mr Fortune, "knows that, wherever the natives are enterprising and bold, they set the Government at defiance, whenever it suits their purpose to do so. For example, what can the Government do, if the natives on the coast of Fokien—a bold and lawless race—choose to disobey its orders? Positively nothing. Even farther north, where the Mandarins are more powerful—in Shanghae, for example—the Chinchew men, as they are called, often fight pitched battles, with firearms, in the streets and in the open day; and the Mandarins, with all their soldiers at their backs, dare not interfere. The system of apprehension and punishment in such cases is so curious, that I must not omit to mention it. The belligerents are allowed to fight as long and as fiercely as they choose, and the soldiers never interfere; but when the weakest side is overpowered, and probably a number of lives lost in the affray, they come down in great force, and seize and carry off to punishment the most defenceless; and, in circumstances of this kind, they are not over particular about seizing the most riotous, or those most implicated in the disturbances, provided those they seize are the weakest and least able to resist."

The danger arising from these popular *émeutes* greatly increased after our first war with the Chinese. The attempts of the Government to replenish the exhausted exchequer, by imposing heavier taxes, encountered a most determined resistance from the people. The soldiers, who were ordered to enforce payment, were in most cases driven back, and the Government was obliged at last to hush up the matter by effecting a

* *Six Months with the Chinese Expedition.*

compromise. This disastrous attempt begat similar resistance in other parts of the country; and the comparative disrespect into which the Emperor and his Mandarins had fallen, in consequence of their defeat by the "barbarians," greatly augmented the boldness of the malcontents. "Democratic assemblies, in which the rights of man were declared," rose in many parts of the country. "The elders and gentry took the lead, and demanded that, in all measures in which the happiness of the people were concerned, they should be first consulted. If there was anything that did not suit their wishes, they instantly remonstrated; and, if this proved ineffectual, they proceeded with an immense crowd to the Government offices, and carried by force what was denied to courtesy."*

In Canton and its environs, a belief had prevailed that the populace could beat the Barbarians, and permission was accordingly given to wear arms and organise a numerous militia. The leaders of this movement, however, either were, or soon became, demagogues, and began to hold monster meetings for political ends. In this emergency the characteristic policy of the Chinese Government was manifested—which is, to adapt itself to circumstances, and to yield, rather than put the supreme authority in jeopardy by firm resistance. Seeing the impossibility of stemming the popular current, many Mandarins sided with the people, doubtless with the wise object of endeavouring to gain the direction of these dangerous movements. Every effort was made to rule by the masses, and to establish practically the truism, that the Government exists for the benefit of the people, not the people for the benefit of the Government. This warded off any direct collision between the State and its subjects, but, as was to be expected, much anarchy arose in consequence of the weakening of the Executive. In one case "a prefect," says Gutzlaff, "having beaten an innocent man in the streets, the sufferer appealed to his fellow-citizens, collected a crowd of more than ten thousand, and proceeded

* Gutzlaff's *Life of Taou-kwang.*

directly to the establishment of the obnoxious Mandarin, which was burnt down, and razed to the ground; a declaration being made, that in such a manner would the sovereign people avenge themselves. The military were called out, but would not attack the people; and the Government, utterly powerless, had to overlook the insult. . . . Similar scenes of outrage and popular revenge occurred in many parts of China, and the ascendancy of the populace daily increased. Men of the worst character, gifted with a glib tongue, put themselves at the head of the movement, and did incalculable mischief. The Mandarins were often obliged to buy off these demagogues, and to make their peace by very large and important concessions. Thus the whole state of society underwent a change, such as had never been anticipated. The people armed themselves, and paraded in large masses, ostensibly for the purpose of exterminating the robbers, but in reality to terrify the Mandarins."

Is this "somnolent" China we are reading of, or is it a leaf from the opening scenes of the French Revolution? The events are strangely alike in both cases, but the career of democracy in the two countries can never be alike. The French rose against a system and a class—the Chinese do neither. There are no castes, no privileged classes with them, and the Mandarins and officials have risen from the common mass. It is only the abuses of power against which the Chinese protest, not against its form. They admire and venerate with their whole heart the Governmental system of their country, which is not only associated with their whole past history, but which adapts itself admirably to the national spirit. It is no mere theoretical constitution, such as have lately been so much in vogue in Europe,—it is a perfect embodiment of the Chinese predilections in government, and has grown with the growth and strengthened with the strength of the people. Dynasties fall, but the constitution remains, and probably will remain as long as China is a united empire.

It is high time the rest of the world were acquainting itself

with this portion of the vast human family that has so long segregated itself upon the plains of China. The world seems to have entered again upon a migratory era of mankind, in which not merely solitary individuals are seen groping their way over land or over sea, in search of the excitement of adventure or the pleasure of acquiring strange knowledge; but whole nations are feverous with the passion for emigration, and throw off their surplus swarms to settle in the more favoured places of the earth. Emigration is the effort of individuals to better themselves. The units of society are learning to think for themselves; and the spread of peace and tolerance, and the triumphs of mechanical invention, are laying "the world all before them where to choose." It is a great thing to see this power of reflection and self-reliance spreading among mankind; for assuredly, wherever it is met with, it argues a stage of national development which only long centuries of civilisation suffice to produce. Such a faculty it is, fostered by the domestic circumstances which we have described, which is now drawing those hermits of the world, the Chinese, from their long seclusion, and bringing them into yearly and fast-increasing contact with Europeans. Alike in California and Australia, in our West India colonies and in the islands of the Pacific, the Chinaman may be seen side by side with the European, the Negro, and the Malay; and as he immeasurably transcends the other coloured races in industry and intelligence, so not unfrequently he may compare with the European even in point of that business-like cast of intellect which we self-managing Anglo-Saxons so highly prize.

The Chinese are coming out into foreign lands to meet us, and we in turn are posting ourselves on their shores to become better acquainted with them. In fact, of late, China has been such a centre of interest, that almost every Power that has a navy, has a detachment of war-vessels cruising off its shores. Great Britain, America, France, Russia (not to speak of stray vessels of other Powers), are regularly represented by naval

squadrons in its waters; so that China, the oldest and not least notable of existing empires, is actually revolutionising and reforming herself under the eyes of the leading representatives of the world's civilisation. It is high time, then, we repeat, that Europe should know as much as possible of this vast Power that is now for the first time being linked into the community of nations. Every information respecting its character and customs has now a practical and more than ordinary value; and it is all the more wanted, inasmuch as no people appears hitherto to have been more imperfectly comprehended by the rest of the world.

Twelve centuries before our era, we find the Chinese, by indisputable proof, in a condition of advanced civilisation. Not to recur to the larger items of civilisation, of which we have already spoken, they were then in possession of gold and silver —had money, and kept accounts—had silks, dyed in many colours—leather, hemp, wine, jewels, ivory, carriages, horses, umbrellas, earthenware, &c.; they had a literature, and a Board of History; and, moreover, a very complete ceremonial of observances, the empire being regulated with all the minute formality of a household, in conformity with its household origin. Arrived at that condition thirty centuries ago, the Chinese are commonly supposed to have remained nearly stationary ever since, and to offer at this day a living picture of the condition of their nation three thousand years ago. We have shown, from the history of this curious people, how fallacious is this opinion, alike in regard to their religion and their government; and we have filled in with broad touch the more salient features which have characterised the material and intellectual career of the nation throughout its forty centuries of vicissitude. Now, dispensing with abstract disquisitions, we desire to present a rapid sketch of the national life of China in its more practical and social aspects.

In length of years the Chinese Empire has no rival; nor is it easy to find in the rest of the world's history, any States

which may profitably be paralleled with it. In point of extent and populousness, the only ancient empire that can at all compare with it is the Roman; yet, in almost every other respect, they differ as widely as it is possible for any two States to do. Rome founded its empire wholly by the sword, China mainly by the ploughshare; the former by daring soldiers, the latter by plodding peasants. The conquests of Rome were those of a city that came to cast its chains over a world; the triumphs of China have been those of a prolific nation, that absorbed its very conquerors. The splendid talents of the Roman generals, the ardour of the citizens to extend the republic, the thirst for glory, and the matchless skill and self-devotion of the legionaries, may find nothing equal among the sons of Han; but these latter produced heroes of peace, who instructed the people in industry and the useful arts, and increased by their skill the riches and population of the country. The former were masters in the art of destroying, the latter in that of preserving and multiplying human life. In China we must not (at least nowadays) look for the noble sentiments and grand actions which immortalised Greece and Rome. We find there an industrious but common-minded race, which strives stoutly to maintain its existence, however its numbers may multiply, and which finds no heart to sacrifice life for glory, no time to postpone business for politics. The rice-bearing plains are the fields of their glory, the centre of their hopes; and as they trudge forth to their never-ceasing labours, thus they sing:—

"The sun comes forth, and we work;
The sun goes down, and we rest.
We dig wells, and we drink;
We sow fields, and we eat.
The Emperor's power, what is it to us?" *

The art of agriculture is coeval with the first establishment of the empire; and to this useful employment China mainly owes its grandeur and populousness. The enormous numbers

* Translation of a Chinese song.

of the people have caused the utmost attention to be paid to the art, and the cultivation of much of the country approaches as near as possible to garden-farming. Some parts of the country are mountainous and unfertile, but the greater proportion of it is fruitful, and densely studded with houses. The hills and mountain-sides are terraced; the rocky fragments are gathered off the slopes, and formed into retaining-walls; and the wonders of Chinese irrigation have never been rivalled. Upon the decease of the parents, lands are divided among the male children, and, like all Orientals, the people cleave with great fondness to their patrimonial acres. Any one, by simply applying to Government, may obtain permission to reclaim waste land; and a wise exemption from all taxes, until it becomes productive, allows the cultivator to reap a proper reward for his industry and enterprise. The agricultural knowledge of China cannot vie with ours in point of science; but it is far more widely diffused. A uniform system of cultivation, the result of centuries of experience, is known to, and practised by, every cottar in the empire; and that system is indubitably unequalled by that of any other nation, unless it be our own. The steeping of seeds, and drilling in sowing, are practised, and have been so for ages: they never fail to seize promptly the proper season and weather for their farming operations; they take every advantage of their summer time by the system of double-cropping; and in the vitally important matters of manuring and irrigation, as well as in making the most of their land, they are unsurpassed, perhaps unrivalled, by any nation in the world.

The Chinese Government has always fostered agriculture as peculiarly the national pursuit; and well has it repaid the imperial patronage. A country nearly as large as all Europe, and far more densely peopled — containing, in fact, fully one-third of the whole human race—sustains them more comfortably than any similar number of men on the face of the globe. No emigration has until now issued from its shores,

and each new myriad of the rapidly-augmenting population has gone to increase the strength and resources of the State; while the extremes of poverty and riches (that prime bane of old States) are there unknown, wealth being more equally divided than in any civilised country. Undisturbed in their little farms, the people are contented and cheerful; and with comparatively little commerce, and no manufactures (viewed as a distinct employment), the empire has continued for centuries thriving and unshaken by intestine commotions. The home consumers have maintained in comfort the home producers,—the grand opening of new markets has been found in the increase of the population,—the only emigration has been to the hill-side and the marsh. The French historian and philosopher, Sismondi, maintains that the real bone and muscle of a nation is its agricultural population, and predicts the coming ruin of the older states of Europe from the evident decline of this class of their people; but whatever truth there may be in his opinion, no such state of matters is likely soon to sap the foundations of the Chinese empire. There, no millionaire manufacturers, with machinery costing £30,000 or £40,000, overwhelm all competition, and, by ruining the small traders who ply the shuttle as well as till the ground, draw starving thousands to Nanking or Shanghae, feeding the towns to plethora at the expense of the country, and accumulating from the labour of thousands gigantic fortunes for individuals. The small farmer rears his crop of rice, cotton, or tea, dresses it, and sends it to market, and turns it to his own use as food or clothing; and although he seldom succeeds in laying by money, it is only in periods of famine or inundation that he experiences the pressure of want.

"There are few sights more pleasing," says Mr Fortune, "than a Chinese family in the interior engaged in gathering the leaves of the tea-plant, or, indeed, in any of their agricultural pursuits. There is the old man—it may be the grandfather, or even the great-grandfather—patriarch-like directing

his descendants, many of whom are in their youth and prime, while others are in their childhood, in the labours of the field. He stands in the midst of them, bowed down with age, but—to the honour of the Chinese as a nation—he is always looked up to by all with pride and affection, and his old age and grey hairs are honoured, revered, and loved." In the tea-districts, every cottager or small farmer has his own little tea-garden, the produce of which supplies the wants of his family, and the surplus brings him in a few dollars, which procure for him the other necessaries of life. "When, after the labours of the day are over," says Mr Fortune, "they return to their humble and happy homes, their fare consists chiefly of rice, fish [with which their rivers and lakes abound], and vegetables, which they enjoy with great zest, and are happy and contented. I really believe that there is no country in the world where the agricultural population are better off than they are in the north of China. Labour with them is pleasure, for its fruits are eaten by themselves, and the rod of the oppressor is unfelt and unknown. . . . For a few *cash* (1000 or 1200 cash = 1 dollar) a Chinese can dine in a sumptuous manner upon his rice, fish, vegetables, and tea; and I fully believe that in no country in the world is there less real misery and want than in China. The very beggars seem a kind of jolly crew, and are kindly treated by the inhabitants."

Commerce is discouraged by the Chinese Government, chiefly on account of their jealousy of strangers; but it is a pursuit so congenial to the national spirit that no exertions will succeed in putting it down. Wherever money can be made, a Chinaman will brave dangers to gain it, and will fear neither the jungles and marshes of his southern frontier, nor the inhospitable deserts of the north and west. For a thousand years and more, they have trafficked with the isles of the Indian Archipelago, and for nearly twice that time their silks have found their way into Europe. Nevertheless, the geographical situation of the country on the one hand, and the unskilfulness of

the Chinese in maritime enterprise on the other, oppose great obstacles to their prosecution of external commerce, so that the carrying-trade is almost entirely in the hands of foreigners. The journey across the inhospitable steppes of Mongolia to the nations of the west, or over the almost insurmountable Himalayas to those of the south, is attended by too much risk and expense, in the present state of the roads, to be prosecuted extensively; but the Chinese eagerly avail themselves of the marts opened in recent times by the Russian traders, and throng with their silks and tea to the grand fairs at Maimatschin. This overland commerce with Russia commenced in the reign of Peter the Great, by a treaty which stipulated for a reciprocal liberty of traffic, and by virtue of which caravans on the part of the Russian Government and individual traders used to visit Peking; but the Muscovites exhibited so much of their native habits of "drinking and roystering," that, after trying the patience of the Celestials for three-and-thirty years, they were wholly excluded. After a temporary cessation of intercourse, however, a renewal of negotiations took place, by which it was agreed that only Government caravans should proceed to Peking, and Kiachta (distant four thousand miles from Moscow, one thousand from Peking, and close to the Chinese frontier town of Maimatschin) was built for the accommodation of private traders. This market, which has now risen to much importance, is most resorted to in winter. To the chief Russian merchants the trade is a species of monopoly, and a most thriving one,—some of them being millionaires, and living in the most sumptuous style, the "merchant princes" of the wilderness. "At the present day," says the *Hamburg Borsenhalle*, "the wholesale trade is in the hands of Russian merchants and commercial companies, while the retail trade is carried on by the Siberian tribe of Burglaetes. The wholesale trade takes place only twice a-year, and is a complete interchange of goods, of which black tea forms the staple, and cannot be replaced by any other article. This tea is brought

to Kiachta from the northern provinces of China, and is very superior to that exported by the English and Dutch from the southern provinces. The green tea which comes to the market is consumed by the Kalmucks, Tartars, and Siberians. The duty on tea yields a considerable annual revenue, which is the sole advantage the Chinese claim from this important article of commerce. The Chinese will take nothing but cloth in return; and thus the consumers of tea are the persons who are the cloth-manufacturers. The Russians themselves derive no pecuniary advantage from this trade. They might make some profits, and the consumers pay less for their teas, if the trade were not monopolised; and if the tea might be exported from St Petersburg to Odessa on payment of a moderate duty, the northern provinces of China would be obliged to lower the price of their tea, for which they have no other outlet."

Although Fine Art has made little progress, and is little prized, great works, in which genius is joined to utility, are to be met with in China on a larger scale than anywhere else. Such a work is the Great Wall, raised by the first emperor to repel the inroads of the Nomades, and which guards the northern frontier for the space of fifteen hundred miles, from the shores of the Yellow Sea to Eastern Tartary. It is carried over the highest hills, descends into the deepest valleys, crosses upon arches over rivers, and at important passes is doubled;—being, in fact, by far the largest structure that human labour ever raised. A work more extraordinary still is the Imperial Canal. The Mongol emperor, Kublai Khan, who fixed the seat of government at Peking, constructed (or rather completed) the canal, in order to remedy the sterility of the plain in which that city stands. From the vicinity of Peking it extends southwards for a distance of six hundred geographical miles,—now tunnelled through heights, now carried through lakes and over marshes and low grounds by means of stupendous embankments,—and exhibiting not merely a gigantic effort of labour, but sound

practical skill on the part of its constructors, in availing themselves of every advantage that could be derived from the nature of the ground. Rivers feed it, and ships of good size spread their sails on its bosom. It is along this watery highway that the chief supplies are brought for the immense population of the capital; and another great merit of the work is, that it acts at once as an irrigator and as a drain to the country through which it flows, from Tientsin to the Yangtsekeang; for while at some parts fertilising the sterile soil by diffusing its waters, at others being carried along the lowest levels, and communicating with the neighbouring tracts by flood-gates, it renders available for agriculture much land that would otherwise be a useless swamp.

Education in China, as we have seen, is directed almost exclusively to the inculcation of moral and constitutional principles; and with such good effect, that nowhere in the East are the social relations so well understood and preserved. Class has never risen against class, and the religious apathy of the people has prevented any war of creeds. This social harmony has had the best effects upon the welfare of the people, by rendering an iron rule unnecessary on the part of the Government. However absolute the administration may be, the great mass of the people live quietly and happily, enjoying the fruits of their industry. The legislation is disfigured by an excessively minute attention to trifles,—an unavoidable result of the system of regulating the mind of the people through the agency of external observances; but the code is, on the whole, a clear and concise series of enactments, savouring throughout of practical judgment and European good sense; and if not always conformable to our liberal notions of legislation, in general making a near approach to them. The laws are more generally known and equally administered than in the other States of Asia,—wealth, comfort, and cheerful industry more equally diffused; and Mr Ellis pronounces the Celestial Empire superior to them all in the arts of government and the general aspect of society. Sir George Staun-

ton says that the condition of the people is "wholly inconsistent with the hypothesis of a very bad government or a very vicious state of society," and conceived that he could trace almost everywhere the unequivocal signs of an industrious, thriving, and contented people. Mr Davis goes further than this, and says that "there is a business-like character about the Chinese, which assimilates them in a striking degree to the most intelligent nations of the West; and there is less difference [in this respect?] between them and the British, French, and Americans, than between these and the inhabitants of Spain and Portugal, whose proneness to stolid bigotry and Oriental laziness was perhaps in part imbibed from the Arabs."

In regard to slaves, the code metes out less equal justice; but a like onesidedness has defaced the legislation of every country —and slavery, as it exists in China, is infinitely milder than anywhere else either in the East or West. It is not superior humanity and generosity which occasions this difference: it results from the social condition of the nation. Slavery is the apprenticeship which, in one shape or another, uncivilised man has had to undergo in all countries before becoming capable of sustained industry and self-government. In this state he falls under the power of his more civilised fellows, and obtains food and protection in exchange for freedom; and it is only when he has raised himself above the indolence and improvidence of savage life that liberty becomes beneficial even for himself. Resembling the western half of Europe, the whole Chinese nation is industrious, and has acquired that relish for the artificial wants of civilised life which tends so greatly to man's elevation, and which is so little felt elsewhere (save in some of the highest classes) in the regions of the East and South. No political or social distinctions of rank or caste exist in China, and education is provided by the State for all classes. On these accounts there is no servile class; and those who have lost or bartered their freedom resemble their masters in everything but wealth, and are treated rather as menials than as serfs.

Slavery exists in China not as a relic of barbarism, nor from the prevalence of caste or the absence of industry, but simply, it would appear, as the effect of a redundant population: it is a man's last shift for employment.

We can give a most pleasing anecdote in connection with this point, which recently appeared in the *Java Bode* newspaper, published at Batavia, where there is a large Chinese population—which shows at once the good feeling of the Chinese in regard to the unfortunate objects of slavery, and the remarkable industry and self-relying spirit of the slaves themselves. In giving an account of a sale of slaves at the Chinese camp, it says:—The slaves, who were twelve in number, having been placed upon the table of exposition, arranged in four lots, rattled some money in their hands, and addressed a few words, timidly and in low tones, to the assembly. A person who acted as their agent here stepped forward, and stated that his clients, having accumulated by long and painful labours some small savings, solicited the favour of being allowed to make a bidding for the purchase of their own persons. No opposition was offered; and the first lot of three, being put up to auction, made an offer, through their agent, of forty francs. No advance being made on this sum, the slaves were knocked down to themselves. The next lot, encouraged by their predecessors' success, offered only twenty-four francs for themselves. The public preserved the same silence, and they likewise became their own purchasers. The third lot took the hint, and were even more fortunate, picking themselves up, a decided bargain, for the modest sum of ten francs! The *Java Bode* rightly sees in these facts signs of a great advance in civilisation among the Chinese, who constituted the great majority of the persons present.

Superficial writers on China judge of the whole nation by what they see of the population at Canton; and are profuse in their charges of lying, treachery, and inhumanity,—as if it were even possible for four hundred millions of human

beings to be nothing but one black mass of moral deformity! The monstrousness of the idea ought to have been its own refutation. Such writers might as well conclude that the whole abyss of ocean is a turbid mass, because its fringing waves are "gross with sand." In truth, their conclusions are as unjust as if one were to judge of our own nation solely by the doings of the wreckers of Cornwall or the mobs of our great cities. The inhabitants of Canton are termed the "Southern boors" by their own countrymen; and it may safely be stated of the people of Fokien and the southern coasts of China, with whom alone foreigners come in contact, that they are all more or less addicted to piracy and smuggling, and have adopted the nefarious habits which commerce invariably engenders when carried on between nations who despise, and whose only desire is to overreach, one another. The inadequacy of the ordinary data for judging of Chinese character is at once perceived by the few travellers who have got glimpses of the interior, or of those parts of the country where the manners of the people are unaltered by contact with foreigners. We have already quoted Mr Fortune's pleasing picture of cottar-life in the interior, and on the general question he says:—"The natives of the southern towns and all along the coast, at least as far north as Chekiang, richly deserve the bad character which every one gives them; being remarkable for their hatred to foreigners and conceited notions of their own importance, besides abounding in characters of the very worst description, who are nothing else than thieves and pirates. But the character of the Chinese as a nation must not suffer from a partial view of this kind; for it must be recollected that, in every country, the most lawless characters are amongst those who inhabit seaport towns, and who come in contact with natives of other countries: and unfortunately we must confess that European nations have contributed their share to make these people what they are. In the north of China, and more particularly inland, the natives are entirely different. There are, doubtless, bad characters

and thieves amongst them too: but generally the traveller is not exposed to insult; and the natives are quiet, civil, and obliging." Lord Jocelyn, who was with our fleet during the first war, and who landed on various points of the coast, states, as the experience of his rambles among the villagers, that a kind word to a child, or any little notice taken of the young, will at once ingratiate a stranger with this humane and simple-minded people. Mr Abel, one of Lord Amherst's retinue, in like manner testifies to the simple kindness of the country-people. The nation at large (thanks to their education) are remarkable for the virtues of sobriety and filial reverence,—instances of noble generosity in individuals are said not to be infrequent,—and we may add that no people in the world, unless it be the French, are so ready to take notice of and applaud the casual utterance of noble sentiments. In fine, Mr Lay says, that "no man can deny the Chinese the honourable character of being good subjects—though, from the venality of their magistrates in general, they must often be exposed to many kinds of usage that tempt them to throw off allegiance." And he attributes their steady obedience to constituted authority, not to a tameness of disposition that disposes a man to take kicks without feeling indignation, but to "a habitual sentiment of respect and a share of sterling good sense, that lead him to see and choose what is really best for his own interest."

We have said that there are no separate castes among the Chinese; but one of the most curious features that strikes a stranger in their social life is the division of the people into clans, faintly resembling the clanships of the Scottish Highlanders. There are altogether about 454 of these clans, each of which has its peculiar surname; but no jealous line of demarcation is kept up between these different septs (some of whom number a million of souls), for, by a wise though somewhat stringent provision, every man is required to seek a bride in a different clan from his own,—thus acquiring two surnames. These clans are results of the Patriarchal or Family

system, which forms the basis of the whole political and social arrangements in China. This Family system may seem a very narrow and illiberal one to us enlightened Westerns, and especially to our Transatlantic brethren, among whom the fifth commandment is but little regarded; but its influence upon the social relations in China has been unquestionably good. A Chinese father is a little emperor in his own household; he is held responsible in some degree for their conduct, and is invested with unlimited power over them, so that even the punishment of death is hardly beyond his prerogative. Yet abuses of power are at least as rare there as here. "I have reason to believe," says Mr Lay, "that the sway exercised by Chinese parents is seldom burdensome, and that their will and pleasure are enforced, for the most part, with great mildness." And if we seek to judge of the system by its fruits at large, we find that the duties of mutual love and mutual help are fully recognised, as incumbent upon all who are within the circle of blood or affinity; while the hilarities of family-feasts, or the sorrows of family-mourning, are entered into with a keenness of relish, or an acuteness of feeling, which leaves the Chinese perhaps without a parallel in the world. "Fear God" is a precept of which the modern Chinese know little or nothing; but "Love, honour, and obey your parents," is the fundamental commandment of their moral system,—and to say or do anything against it, is as shocking and disgusting to their feelings as blasphemy to those of a Christian. "The practice of infanticide," says Mr Meadows, speaking of Canton, "exists here, as the bodies of infants floating occasionally on the river sufficiently prove; but it may be fairly doubted whether there is much more of it than in England," where the crime is punished with death, and where, of course, every means is taken to conceal it; "and, often having remarked instances of *deformed female* children being treated with constant and evident affection by their parents, I am inclined to believe that when infants are put to death, it is solely because their parents are altogether

unable to support them." And Mr Lay says, that the *rare* occurrence of dead bodies of children being found in the Canton river "proves that, among a swarming population of indigent people, such deeds are none of their customary doings."

The Chinese are a cheerful, lighthearted race, well trained to social duties, and with no proclivity to the melancholy of the southern nations of Europe, or to the John-Bull tendency towards reserve and isolation. Social feeling—or good-humour, mildness of disposition, and a good-natured propensity to share in the mirth and hilarity of others—are seen wherever one meets with a company of Chinese. To live in society is a Chinaman's meat and drink. In a company of his fellows he is something,—by himself, nothing. Men of study and retirement are to be found in China, but by far the greater number seem to have their hearts set upon social delights and the celebration of public festivity. And what most strikes the spectator at such meetings is, the respect which every one is so anxious to pay to all around him. Nor are such attentions the frigid offspring of mere formality. "Apart from business," says Mr Lay, "the intercourse of natives in China is made up of little acts of homage. The rules of relative duty command an individual to regard a neighbour as an elder brother, and thence entitled to the respect belonging to such eldership. These displays of veneration are not occasioned, then, by dread or hope of gain, but are the spontaneous results of a propriety essential to the character of the people," and strongly developed by their domestic training and the teaching of their schools. In walking abroad, for instance, the stranger may wonder what two gentlemen can have so suddenly found to dispute about; but he soon perceives that each of them is severally refusing to advance a step till the other has set the example, and consented to go ahead!

On the other hand, it must be allowed that most of the loftier qualities of our nature seem to be deficient among the Chinese. The feeling of patriotism, at least nowadays, is almost unknown,

—partly, it may be, owing to the immense size of the empire, and the imperfect intercourse kept up between the several provinces. Loyalty, as we understand the feeling, apparently never at any time had much hold upon the Chinese mind. Reason, rather than emotion, is the prominent feature of their mental constitution; and although they have at all times entertained a profound regard for their sovereign, that regard has reference to the office, not the man, and is quite different from that chivalrous devotion to the monarch's person which plays so prominent a part in the history of European struggles. Self-denial and self-devotion, in fact—that fundamental basis of the noblest of human virtues—rare everywhere, is *very* rare in China. Even peace has its disadvantages. Virtues, like talents, require congenial circumstances to develop them; and probably the long reign of public tranquillity in China—where for nine centuries it has hardly been broken save at intervals of two hundred years—has helped to numb the courageous and masculine sentiment of self-devotion, and allowed the national mind to "settle on its lees." Pleasure, money, sensuality,—these are now the objects that most greatly engross a Chinese. "The Chinese," says Mr Lay, "are lovers of pleasure, from the greatest to the least. They study ease and comfort in a way that leaves them, as a nation, without a rival in the art of ministering to sensual gratification." This proneness to sensual indulgence is unhappily increased by the narrow spirit in which certain portions of their legislation are conceived,—the rich not being allowed to expend their superfluous wealth in the erection of elegant mansions (that being looked upon as a misdirection of money from more useful purposes); nor dare they indulge in much public munificence, lest they attract the covetous eyes of the generally extortionate and unscrupulous mandarins. "A Chinese," says Mr Lay, "is licentious in the general turn of his ideas, and makes a public display of those forbidden pleasures which in many countries are somewhat screened amidst the shades of retirement. The floating abodes

for ladies of pleasure are generally of the gayest kind, and are consequently the first thing to attract the traveller's attention as he draws near the provincial city of Canton." The *auri sacra fames* is not less strong in the breast of a Celestial. "At a very early age," says Mr Lay, "the love of money is implanted in his nature: indeed, one of the first lessons a mother teaches a child is to hold out its hand for a bit of coin." Money, says Gutzlaff, is the idol of the Chinese. "It is the national spirit, the public sentiment, the chief good of high and low"—the higher classes being as eager to obtain it in order to gratify their sensual inclinations, as the poor to procure food.

To call a man a liar is, in England, and in the European world generally, the surest way to provoke anger; but such an epithet has but little weight attached to it in China. This is partly owing to the fact that "white lies" have there a recognised and reputable existence not openly accorded to them elsewhere. In the eyes of a Chinese, as in the code of the Jesuits, a lie in itself is not absolutely criminal, and it may, on the contrary, be very meritorious. According to Confucius, a lie told by a child to benefit a parent is deserving of praise; and a Jeannie Deans, or the stern old father in Mr Warren's *Now and Then*, so far from being held models of religion, would be regarded, the one as a stubborn fanatic, and the other as the most heartless and unnatural of parents. But another, and, we suspect, a much more powerful cause of this want of veracity among the Chinese, is their system of government. Here, as throughout Asia generally, Despotism—or, in other words, an Executive power from which there is no sufficient appeal—generates mendacity in the people, as their sole refuge from irresponsible Power. Duplicity is the resource to which Weakness naturally betakes itself; and it is universally adopted wherever the decrees of Government officials are felt to be unjust as well as unappealable. Everywhere the result is the same; and in this, as in many other respects, a perfect parallel might be drawn between those two vastest empires of modern times, the

Chinese and the Russian. In the latter empire, as in the former, the vastness of the country and consequent impossibility of an efficient surveillance over the host of officials, joined to the absence of municipal institutions and a free press to act as checks upon local tyranny, render it most difficult to detect or repress abuses of power on the part of the Government officers. And the consequence in both countries may be told in the words of Alison, applied to Russia:—"So universal is the dread of Authority, that it has moulded the national character. Dissimulation is universal; and, like the Greeks under the Mussulman yoke, the Russians have become perfect adepts in all the arts by which talent eludes the force of authority, and astuteness escapes the discoveries of power." And we suspect we ought to add, in justice to the Chinese, that this disposition has been impressed upon them, as upon the Russians, by the invasion of the Tartar hordes, which in both countries reduced the native race to subjection for three long centuries.

In China, however, the domination of the Tartars has never been in any degree so complete as it was in Russia; and even among the maritime population, with whom foreigners are brought most in contact, and among whom lying is probably most prevalent, there exists a check which is found sufficient for the transaction of all matters of ordinary importance. Every great, busy, and closely-connected society requires some bond of mutual trust; and this is found, in China, in the custom of *guaranteeing*, which pervades all domestic and mercantile relations. Mr Meadows states it as a fact that he has never known an instance in which a Chinese openly violated a guaranty known to have been given by him; and though, under strong temptations, they will sometimes try to evade its fulfilment, yet such instances are extremely rare, and they generally come promptly forward to meet all the consequences of their responsibility. "A Chinaman," says Mr Lay, "is a man of business, and therefore understands the value of truth. . . . The standard of honesty is perhaps as high in China as in any other commercial

country; and strangers who have known this people during the longest space, speak in the best terms of their integrity. Thieves of a most dexterous kind, and rogues of every description, are plentiful in China, because she has a swarming population to give them birth,—but they are not numerous enough to affect a general estimate of the national character."

The imperfections of human language render it a difficult matter to give a description, at once short and correct, of national character. Thus it is both true and false to say that the Chinese possess a high degree of fortitude. They bear pain or adversity without murmuring or despondency; and, taken individually, they perhaps possess as much constitutional or animal courage as any other specimens of our race. But they are deficient in that courage which is based on self-reliance, and which enables a man to confront danger with a ready intrepidity—because their institutions and antecedents are as unfavourable to its development as those of the Anglo-Americans are singularly propitious. They possess a great command over their tempers, and instances are common of their bearing, with the greatest apparent equanimity, insults and injuries which would make a European ungovernable; and this proceeds not from cowardice, but from their really regarding self-command as a necessary part of civilisation, and passionate or hasty conduct as indecent, and giving evidence of a low nature. The readiness they evince to yield to the force of reason is another quality for which, says Mr Meadows, "the Chinese certainly deserve to be considered a highly civilised people." They settle their disputes more by argument than by violence (a strange thing in the East); and a Chinese placard posted at the street-corners, exposing the unreasonable (*i. e.*, unequitable) conduct of a party in any transaction is, if the want of equity be sufficiently proved, to the full as effective as a similar exposure of an Englishman in a newspaper. Bullies seem to be kept in check by the force of public opinion, and the Chinese neither fight duels, nor, though murders occur as in England, can they be

said to assassinate or poison. Finally, we may round off this *précis* of Chinese character in the words of Mr Lay:—"It is an abuse of terms to say that they are a highly moral people, but we may affirm that the moral sense is in many particulars highly refined among them. Respect to parents and elders, obedience to law, chastity, kindness, economy, prudence and self-possession, are the never-failing themes for remark and illustration."

No people in the world consume so little butcher-meat as the Chinese; and, unlike the Eastern nations—such as the Jews, Hindoos, Parsees, and Mohammedans generally—their favourite meat is pork. In fact, in China, as in other parts of the world, the cottar-system of landholding is found unfavourable to the rearing of horses, cattle, or sheep, but quite adapted (as witness Ireland) for the rearing of pigs. The national system of agriculture, like almost everything else in China, is based upon the strictly utilitarian principle of turning everything to the greatest account. We do not pretend to settle off-hand here how far the stimulating diet of animal food is necessary or advantageous to mankind. We would simply remark that butcher-meat is matter in a more highly organised form, and more nearly assimilated in composition to our own frames than vegetable food. It is in diet what alcohol is in drink; and the nations who most indulge in it—such as the British, the Anglo-Americans, and savages who live by the chase (we beg pardon for the unflattering conjunction!)—are generally as remarkable for gloomy strength and perseverance, as the more vegetarian nations are for cheerful quickness and volatility. But the preference which from time immemorial has been accorded to grain-crops in China is based upon the principle, that grain is the cheapest form in which food can be produced, and that a much more numerous population can be maintained in comfort by tillage than by pasturage. Sheep have been styled "the devourers of men;" and the Chinese monarch who first turned the people from pastoral life, and taught them the civil-

ising science of agriculture, is still, after the lapse of more than four thousand years, venerated throughout the empire by the title of "the divine Husbandman." Fish, which abound in the numerous lakes with which the country is studded, and rice and other kinds of vegetable produce, form the staple of the national diet. From stern necessity, as well as from a wise and unparalleled economy, everything is turned to full account, and even hair-cuttings and pairings of all kinds are made matter of traffic; while everything nutritive, including "rats and mice, and such small deer" (however unclean, according to European notions), are searched out and eaten for food. Opium is much in use; but both the perniciousness of its effects, and the extent to which it is indulged in, have been overstated by most writers on the subject. The misery caused by it is never to be compared to the plague of drunkenness, which is the bane of our own country. "Redness of the eyes," as a mark of intoxication, is very conspicuous in the Chinese, as it was in the days of Solomon among the Jews; and if you see two Chinamen walking hand-in-hand in the street, says Mr Lay, it is ten to one that they are both flustered with drink!

The Chinese, like most Asiatics, do not dance for pleasure, nor are their unmelodious voices formed for song. Their favourite amusements are games of chance,—in which, perhaps, they out-do all Asiatics. The grand aim of a Chinaman, as we have said, is *to enjoy himself;* and this colours even his gravest doings. With him, banqueting and religious ceremonies are the same thing, and he would never keep any sacred festival if he could not enjoy himself. No festival is without its play, and only a few temples are without a stage; and so fond are the people of theatricals, that they will attend a whole night to them without showing the least weariness, and will afterwards recount with ecstasy what they have seen. The people in general never pray, nor have they any forms of prayer; and the Mandarins, on public occasions, only recite a formula, in the shape of a simple message, to the idols, but

never address them in their own words. The affairs of this life are ever uppermost in the mind of a Chinese; and long life, wealth, and male children, are the great objects of desire. Nothing is regarded with so much horror as death—gloomy death, after which their souls go to wander cheerless among the genii; and strange to say, the elixir of life seems to have been more generally and more perseveringly sought after in reasoning and materialistic China than among the most spiritual and imaginative nations of mankind.

"Polygamy," says Mr Lay, "is not practised by all, and is seldom indulged in till the husband is advanced in years. It appears that by far the greater number among the rich, as well as all among the poor, reap the solaces of connubial life without suffering this hemlock to grow in their furrows. A few, from the surfeit of too much ease and prosperity, indulge in this practice, and a few more have recourse to it for the sake of building up their house with an heir, or a more numerous progeny;" while on the other side it is fostered by "the anxiety of parents to see their daughters provided for in the houses of the great, and to reap a personal advantage from noble alliances." For untiring industry, cheerfulness of temper, fidelity to their husbands, and care of their offspring, the poor women are most exemplary. Any one who visits China will find proofs of this wherever he turns his eyes, and a traveller has only to lay his hand upon the head of a little child to earn applause from a whole crowd of bystanders.

Constancy, habit of respect, and the social feeling are easily recognisable in the character of the Chinese women. Chinese stories are full of examples of love that knows no bounds. "There is only one heaven," said a forlorn maiden, when her parents upbraided her for spending her days in sorrowful libations of salt tears at the tomb of her lover, "and he was that heaven to me!" "A native of the United States," says Mr Lay, "married a Chinese female, who had never felt the benefits of education, and therefore could scarcely have learnt

to cultivate this sentiment by lessons from those who were older than herself. She accompanied her husband to America, and afterwards back again to Macao, where a friend of mine paid her lord a visit. On his return, I asked him how she demeaned herself towards her better half. 'With great respect,' was the answer. And this testimony in her favour was not solitary; for the captain who conveyed the pair across the Atlantic declared he had never met with such passengers before, and that the wife rendered the services of a stewardess unnecessary in the cabin, and with her own hands kept everything in an admirable state of order and neatness." When a stranger sees that a Chinese lady of the house is not entitled to receive any civilities or acts of courtesy from the friend of her husband, and forgets that this interdict is founded upon motives of propriety, consecrated by the usage of the earliest times, he is very apt to think her slighted, and that those apartments which the Chinese have decorated with so many flowery names are but a sort of prison. This is a great mistake, however, and the women of China are not only exempt from that rigid seclusion which prevails elsewhere in the East, but are treated much more nearly on terms of equality with their husbands. There is nothing abject or mean, either in principle or practice, in the deference which is paid, among high and low alike, to husbands. "The air of a Chinawoman," says Mr Lay, "has a majesty about it which is only compatible with sentiments of freedom; and the tone of her voice and the glance of her eye indicate a consciousness that she was not born to be despised."

The existing monuments of ancient civilisation in China are not of the same kind as those of Egypt and Assyria, of Greece and Rome. Time has spared the mighty structures of these latter empires, as if in compensation for having buried the nations that reared them; but in China, where the dynasties have succeeded one another without interruption, and the people have gone on increasing in numbers, down to our own

day, the wars which have swept over it, and the revolutions which have shaken it, have destroyed almost all the monuments which would have attested its former magnificence. We refer particularly to the great revolution effected by the Emperor Che-hoang-te (about 246 B.C.), who, for political purposes, ordered the destruction of every monument of the past, whether in metal, in stone, or on paper,—a proscription which lasted for nearly a century, and which left comparatively little to be regained by the most persevering researches of after ages. Nevertheless, the early ages of the Chinese empire seem to have been distinguished by not a little science and by many rare discoveries. In their carefully kept ancient annals, we have full particulars of the circumstances attending an eclipse of the sun, which happened 2155 years before Christ; and in the reign of Shun, a century before this, we read of "the instrument adorned with precious stones, which represented the stars, and the movable tube which served to observe them"—words which plainly indicate a celestial sphere, and a telescope, of some kind or other. After speaking of the discussions which took place in Europe last century, in regard to the high antiquity of astronomical observations in China, M. Pauthier remarks,—"All that we know of the reigns of the philosophical emperors, Yao, Shun, and Yu, and of the state of astronomical science in their time, justifies the supposition that, in the days of those emperors, sure methods were known for calculating beforehand the precise date of eclipses of the sun and moon, and all that concerned the calendar." Another piece of knowledge possessed by the ancient Chinese, which is calculated to astonish our modern astronomers and mathematicians, is that not merely of the general spherical shape of the earth, but of its oblate form, in consequence of the flattening of the poles. The *Sacred Book of Annals* mentions facts which indirectly prove that music, poetry, and painting were known from the earliest historic times of China; and we know for certain that in the days of Confucius, the first of those arts was carefully studied,

and apparently highly developed. Gunpowder was known four centuries before our era, and we read not only of this "devouring fire," but of "fire-boxes," "fire-tubes," and "globes containing the fire of heaven,"—which latter expression, by its allusion to lightning, seems to indicate as if powder, even in those days, was used as something more than a mere toy. A knowledge of the properties of the magnet or loadstone is another thing in which the Chinese were some two thousand or more years in advance of the Europeans; and the art of printing (by means of wooden blocks—xylography) was in use among them six centuries before anything of the kind was thought of elsewhere.

The character of Chinese literature may be guessed from what we have said of their system of education, which eschews speculation, and attends to little else than the precepts of public and private morality. The grandest, or we may say, the only grand, achievements of their literature are in the department of practical politics and morals; and next to this are their annals and statistical reports upon the various provinces of the empire. Poetry is much studied by the educated classes in early life for the sake of obtaining command of language and elegance of expression, the latter of which is highly valued in the communications and epistles of the Government officials: but the Chinese temperament possesses little of the *vis poetica;* and of the millions of Mandarins who have learned to rhyme, very few indeed have written anything that would pass as mediocre in Europe. They have a good command of poetic figures and expressions, and their descriptive pieces and moral odes are fair productions; but that is all that can be said in their favour. Historical writings occupy a prominent place in their literature, and the greatest pains are taken to insure accuracy of statement; but these works are mere annals or chronologies, and have no pretensions to those intellectual and artistic qualities which distinguish the Livys and Xenophons, the Gibbons and Humes of ancient and modern Europe. It is

to the credit of China that she has had a drama from a very early period, although we cannot speak particularly as to its merits. The writing of novels, also, dates as far back as the third century, and seems to be a department of literature very congenial to the Chinese mind. Such works exist in great numbers, and amongst much trash there are some very able productions.

In the appreciation of beauty, the Chinese are below any other nation that ever emerged from barbarism. Their painting is of a very commonplace description, — though not so bad as it is generally supposed to be in this country; and their only notion of sculpture is to represent a thing lusty in order that it may look grand. Their architecture, says Mr Barrow, "is void of taste, grandeur, beauty, solidity, or convenience; their houses are merely tents [an exaggeration]; and there is nothing magnificent even in the palace of the emperor." One of the few notable exceptions to this remark is the celebrated Porcelain Pagoda at Nanking, which Du Halde (leaning to eulogium as Barrow to disparagement), thought "the most solid, remarkable, and magnificent structure in the Eastern world." For this want of beauty in their buildings, some excuse may be found in the circumstance that the law does not permit them to deviate from the established rules, and that any Mandarin who should venture to indulge an architectural fancy of his own would quickly draw down upon himself the vengeance of the Board of Rites. But "when there's a will there's a way," and had the general taste advanced much beyond the tent-shaped domiciles of their early ancestors, the administration of the law would not long have proved an insurmountable barrier to improvement.

However flattering to the Chinese some of the preceding statements may be, it will be seen on the whole, that they by no means hold a high place in regard to might of intellect. The discoverers of many important facts, and inventors of many useful arts, they yet seem as if they had stumbled upon them

by chance, and were unable to appreciate their value; and the highly civilised race who, ages ago, were familiar with astronomy and printing, gunpowder and the magnetic needle, are now incomparably surpassed in their use by nations comparatively of yesterday. "Their mechanical contrivances," says Mr Wade, "remain but as monuments of an originality which seems to have exhausted itself by its earlier efforts. They appear never to have investigated the principles of the discoveries by which the requirements of their agriculture, architecture, or navigation, were first satisfied. The means which their genius suggested to meet their immediate wants they adopted, and, without the aid of theory, perfected—in some instances, to a degree not surpassed, if attained, by the most scientific of nations: but errors and defects were left untouched; no spirit of inquiry quickened the dormant powers of their reason, and the lack of a habit of reflection prevented their pushing their invention beyond a certain necessary point." There is something stunted or microscopic in the intellect of the Chinese, which leads them to magnify trifles, yet to be blind when great facts stare them in the face,—to keep the steam-engine a toy and gunpowder a plaything, yet to spend an infinity of skill and patience upon the manufacture of one of their ivory puzzles. Excellent in imitation, and well adapted for details, they are yet deficient in that highest quality of genius which grasps a subject at once in all its bearings—which reasons outwards and upwards from the centre-object of contemplation, and which discerns in it its latent powers and the uses to which they may be applied,—which sees in the vapour of a kettle the embryo of the mighty steam-engine, and in the fall of an apple the gravitating force which sustains the universe.

There cannot be a doubt, however, that the Chinese character has never yet had fair play. It has never had such advantages as those enjoyed by the nations of Europe, and indeed by every civilised community of modern times. We will not speak of the over-population, and consequent ceaseless and absorbing

struggle for the necessaries of life, which ever tends to act injuriously upon the moral and intellectual qualities of the mass of a nation,—by extinguishing all high aspirations, and bending down the soul in slavery to the wants of the moment; for that over-population is not peculiar to China, and has, moreover, the attendant, though hardly compensating, benefit of sharpening the national wits, and placing a large supply of cheap labour at the disposal of capital. We would rather point out the following peculiarity which affects this people alone of the nations of the earth, and which must ever be kept in mind by those who would correctly appreciate China's place in universal history.

The Chinese empire belongs to the ancient—indeed, we ought to say to the primitive, world. It has long survived the empires of Egypt and Assyria, and the kingdoms of ancient India,—yet it is with these States alone that the isolated civilisation of China can fairly be compared. Like them, China has reared a civilisation for herself, without any help from without. Throughout her unparalleled existence of more than forty centuries, she has been a world to herself. No influx of new ideas, no inspection of other civilisation than her own, has been granted to her. She has grown up like a Crusoe and his children and grandchildren, upon a solitary island,—forced ever to compare themselves by themselves, and never enjoying the rare privilege, and help to improvement, to "see ourselves as others see us." We Europeans of the present day—in this age of "running to and fro upon the earth"—are privileged to behold the endless variety of life, manners, and institutions with which the world is stored,—to judge of them by their several effects, as revealed in the pages of history, and to draw from them their moral; thus benefiting by the experience of a whole world, and perfecting ourselves upon the model of the best of our race. Moreover the blood of a dozen different tribes of mankind runs in our veins (as was the case on a smaller scale in ancient Greece), producing a richly-blended nature, excel-

ling in all departments, whether of thought or action—producing now a Shakespeare and now a Napoleon, now a Hildebrand and now a Howard, now a Richard Cœur-de-Lion and now a Peter the Hermit, now a Luther and now a Mozart, now a Cromwell and now a Robespierre, now a Scott, a Watt, a Burns, a Dickens, a Kean, or a Grimaldi. China, on the contrary, presents but one phase of human nature,—but to that phase it has done marvellous justice. Good sense is its only idol—practical usefulness its prime test; and we have yet to learn that the former of these qualities has ever been more wisely or so perseveringly worshipped, or the latter been so unflinchingly and universally applied.

An attentive observation seems to indicate that this most ancient of empires, for long stationary in power and intellect, has of late been in many respects retrograding. "The arts once peculiarly their own," says Mr Wade, "have declined;—neither their silks nor their porcelain, in their own estimation, equal in quality those of former years." And Mr Fortune arrives at a similar conclusion from the signs of decay which he met with in his wanderings. "There can be no doubt," he says, "that the Chinese empire arrived at its highest state of perfection many years ago, and since then it has been rather retrograding than advancing. Many of the northern cities, evidently once in the most flourishing condition, are now in a state of decay, or in ruins; the pagodas which crown the distant hills are crumbling to pieces, and apparently are seldom repaired; the spacious temples are no longer as they used to be in former days; even the celebrated temples on Poo-too-San (an island near Chusan), to which, as to Jerusalem of old, the natives came flocking to worship, show all the signs of having seen better days. And from this I conclude that the Chinese, as a nation, are retrograding." Were this falling off only visible in the case of the temples, it might be accounted for by the increasing apathy or scepticism of the people in regard to their religion; but, in truth, these signs of decay extend into

almost every department of the State. And, writing immediately before the present rebellion broke out, Mr Wade says, "With a fair seeming of immunity from invasion, sedition, or revolt, leave is taken to consider this vast empire as surely, though slowly, decaying. It has, in many respects, retrograded since the commencement of the present dynasty, and in none that we are aware of has it made any sensible progress."

It would be a great error, however, to suppose that this vast empire is now stooping irretrievably to a fall. The whole tenor of its past history forbids the supposition. Again and again has China reformed herself;—again and again has she passed through the purifying furnace of suffering and convulsion, and re-emerged firm as before. Her periodic convulsions are the healthy efforts of nature to throw off the corruptions which ease engenders in the system; and however much temporary suffering may attend the present, like every other of its score of preceding revolutions, the resultant good will ultimately atone for all. China will never fall. Her homogeneousness, and the unconquerable vastness of her population, endow her with an earthly immortality. We have said that her population lacks the variety of Europe; but in that variety, be it noted, there lurks political weakness, as much as intellectual strength. Every unit of Chinese society is homogeneous. The whole population are *one* —in blood, sentiments, and language: hence it contains none of those discordant elements, those unwillingly-yoked parts, which proved the destruction of the old "universal empires," and which are destined ere long to annihilate the present territorial system of Europe. China, in fact, has ever been, and is, what Germany and Slavonia, and every other great State of the future will be—a *Race Empire;*—and therefore indestructible. The Monguls may reign in it for eighty years, or the Mantchoos for two hundred,—and even then only by adopting the political and social institutions of the natives. But as time runs on, the wheel ever turns; one after another the

foreign hosts are chased from the land, and a native dynasty is destined still to wield the sceptre of the Flowery Land.

But we must say more than this in regard to the fortunes of China. What she has hitherto wanted is, *new ideas:* and now she is about to get them. In old times, nations could hardly inoculate their neighbours with their ideas save by conquest, and new mental life was only produced after a temporary death of liberty. It is otherwise nowadays, and China is likely to benefit by the change. As long as she was feeble, and as long as the sword was the only civiliser, Providence kept her shut in from the prowess of the restless Western nations. But now that her people have grown like the sands on the sea-shore for multitude, and that steam has become the peaceful "locomotive of principles," China is opened. Often as she has reformed herself before, the present is her true second birth. She will now obtain those new ideas of which she has hitherto been starved, and will enter into ever-memorable union with the rest of the civilised world. The energy and science of the Anglo-Saxons will penetrate the empire, and the Chinese will not be slow to avail themselves of the new lights. Aversion to change, when such change is recommended by manifest utility, is not an original element of the Chinese character,—as we learn on the authority of Jesuit writers two centuries ago, before the advent to power of the Tartars, and their jealous exclusion of foreigners. And then, what country in the world can compare with China as a field for the triumphs of mechanical enterprise! Its vast rivers and canals present unrivalled scope for steam-navigation; and its wide plains and valley-lands offer matchless facilities for railways. And then all this amidst the densest and busiest population in the world. The amount of internal travelling in China is such, that we are assured by those who have penetrated into the interior, that there are continuous streams of travellers on horse, on foot, and on litters, as well as long lines of merchandise, from Canton to the Great Wall, and over distances of fifteen hundred

miles;—in many parts so crowded as to impede one another, and even in the mountain-passes so numerous as to leave no traveller out of sight of others before or behind. In what other country of the world are such phenomena to be met with? And though it were vain to enter upon the tempting field for speculation which these few facts—and they could be multiplied indefinitely—present to us; yet we need have no hesitation to predict a striking future for the Chinese race, and one which will benefit the world at large, perhaps not less than themselves.

A new Religion and Civilisation now stand at the door and knock. And, be it said, we know no country in the world where the people are so well fitted by their own native training to appreciate them. Religion, like everything else, must be coloured by the peculiar temperament and associations of the people who adopt it; and hence the sanguine hope that the Chinese will forthwith become Christians in all respects like unto ourselves, is not destined to be realised. Nevertheless Christianity never had a fairer field. Three hundred and sixty millions of the human race here lie open to its influence,—whose moral doctrines are almost identical with those of the New Testament,—who are singularly tolerant, inquisitive, and anxious to learn,—and who (greatest and most remarkable help of all) have no definite creed of their own, no positive form of religious belief, in fact no counter revelation with which to oppose the entrance of a purer faith. But Christianity does not come alone. The stores of European knowledge come along with it, and (although a closer acquaintance with the Chinese will show that we have much to learn as well as to impart) will confer upon that long-secluded people inestimable advantages, of which they will not be slow to avail themselves. The late wars, and increased communication with the "Barbarians," are fast converting their old contempt for us into an undisguised acknowledgment of our superiority;—the accession of a native dynasty will throw down the barriers behind which China has

for long secluded herself from the world;—a third part of the species will be brought into the comity of nations, and China at last will be *opened*.

It is impossible but that this result must come. For the first time in its history, while a mighty revolution is stirring and shaking the empire within, foreign powers stand at its gates, watching the progress of events, and deeply interested in the issue. Of these powers, three stand forth as the leading empires of the world. Russia, the great nascent power of the Old World, already stretches her giant arms from the Baltic Sea to the distant shores of the Pacific, and, despite the deserts and mountain-chains of Central Asia, is steadily working her way southwards. As if at once to invite and facilitate her advance, settled habits, the forerunners of civilisation, are spreading among the Nomades of the Steppes; who also, according to Gutzlaff, were never so easily ruled as at the present day. It is as certain as anything yet future can be, that the sway over the greater part of those tribes will soon pass from the Chinese Emperor to the Russian Czar,—and by means of them he will act directly and powerfully upon China. Siberia is not all ice and wilderness. One half of it lies south of the latitude of St Petersburg, and its southern limits reach the latitude of Paris. In its southern portion—as, for instance, around Lake Baikal—exist tracts at once fertile and beautiful; and in the mountain-ranges which separate it from the Chinese territory, gold and other minerals have of late years been discovered, and worked with great profit. It is a region, therefore, whose resources are worth developing; but hitherto it has been only by a tedious land journey to Europe that its products could find an outlet. Southwards, the way was barred by immense mountain-chains, and the deserts of Central Asia; on the north stretches the Frozen Ocean, into which all the great Siberian rivers hopelessly fall,—save one, the Amour or Sagalien, which flows westwards into the Sea of Japan. This is the only proper outlet for Siberia; and although nearly the whole course of the river lay

within the dominions of China, we believe the Russians have not only secured the right of free navigation, but also recently have obtained actual possession of the valley and mouths of this great river.

But whatever be the designs of Russia in that quarter, she is likely to encounter an antagonist of superior strength in the rival power of the Anglo-Saxons. Russia is ever for despotism and exclusion, — Britain and America for freedom and toleration; and the latter powers will carry their point so far as China is concerned. America is approaching in great strength direct from California; ere long the Pacific may be crossed, and the enterprising Anglo-Americans brought into direct contact with the now awakened land of the Celestials. Not less steadily are we advancing overland through the territories of Burmah; and the new struggle commencing there will probably soon extend our dominion still farther up the noble stream of the Irrawaddy. Ava is within a hundred and ninety miles of the Chinese frontier, and from Bhamo—the *entrepôt* between the two nations—a highway leads north-eastwards through the southern provinces of the Celestial Empire, along which a commerce is conducted by each nation to the value of more than half-a-million sterling. But it is by sea that, whether peacefully or otherwise, the enterprise of England will most seriously infringe upon the seclusion of China; and, if we are wise, we will direct our advancing steps not by Hong-Kong and Canton into the mountainous provinces of the south-eastern coast, but by Chusan and Shanghae, up the magnificent artery of the Yangtsekeang, into the great valley-region of China, fertile beyond measure, containing Nanking and some of the wealthiest cities of the empire, intersected by a network of canals, and so vast and populous that a hundred and seventy millions of inhabitants are supported on its surface. Six hundred miles from the sea this immense river is nearly a league in width, and of depth sufficient to bear junks of considerable tonnage; and up its broad stream and countless tributaries,

and along the canals communicating with all parts of the interior, the powers of steam-navigation will ere long convey the religion and science, the arts, produce, and arms of the Christian world.

From these events, as well as from the rapid rise of our Australian Empire, it is evident that the Pacific Ocean is about to become the arena of grand and possibly crowning achievements of our race. Is it not a remarkable fact connected with the recent gold-discoveries, that they have all been made "in the uttermost parts of the earth," and within the bosom or on the shores of an Ocean of all others the least whitened by the sails or cheered by the presence of civilised man? Although abounding with islands and archipelagos transcendent alike for beauty and productiveness — where Nature has been enriching the soil by the fall of the leaf throughout five-and-forty centuries — where sun and breeze, wood and water, shore and sea, present endless prizes to the enterprise of civilisation,—no maritime power, no sea-loving people, has ever arisen upon the shores of the Pacific Ocean. From the dawn of history, that longest of the earth's seaboards has sent forth no navy to explore, and occupy, and reclaim the fertile isles and semi-continents which compose that sixth division of the globe which we now entitle Oceanica. Does it not seem as if those vast ocean-realms had been reserved by Providence until now, in order that they might become the seats of a civilisation inspired and dominated by that free Anglo-Saxon race, which, cradled in a little island of the West, has come to throw its mighty arms around the whole world? The name given to the Pacific three centuries ago may prove to have been unwittingly prophetic of its future history — of the comparative millennium which its peaceful waters are yet destined to witness. The numerous isles of that vastest of oceans will cease to be the *Ultima Thules* of navigation, and themselves give birth to kingdoms. Already the various branches of the stalwart Anglo-Saxon race, after com-

passing the earth from the rising to the setting, and from the setting to the rising sun, are meeting again amidst the solitudes of that virgin ocean. And new combinations of mankind are there preparing, to play the leading parts in the last act of the long drama of human life. The New World commenced the fusion of the varied nations of the Old, but it is on the shores, or in the bosom, of the Pacific that that fusion is to be consummated. There, the diverse elements of the population of Eastern America are gathered to a focus in California, and blend with those of China and the intervening isles. Auriferous Australia will ere long be the scene of an analogous combination; and at this moment, in New Zealand, a fusion is in progress between the most powerful of the Caucasian races and the most elevated of the Australasian. Gold is now the great lode-star of the nations, and is destined to break up the seclusion of the hermit races of India and China. It was gold abroad and distress at home that first covered the Atlantic with ships and its western shores with a new population,—and the same agencies of Providence are doing a like service for the Pacific. But the progress of the human race, though slow and liable to many fluctuations, is, on the whole, ever onwards: and instead of the labour-market of the new empires of Oceanica being supplied, like that of Eastern America, by means of violence, and with the captive savages of Negroland, it will be voluntarily occupied,—and ere long flooded,—by the free and industrious outpourings of China.

AN IDEAL ART-CONGRESS

In the Palace of the Fine Arts at Paris—in the prize-room—there is a noble painting by Paul Delaroche, representing an ideal congress of the great masters in Art from the age of Pericles to that of Louis XIV. In subject it is as interesting as in execution it is beautiful. The grouping of the figures is admirable. There, as is proper in Painting, Symmetry is subordinated to Life and Expression. The attitude of each artist is eminently life-like; there is no appearance of vacancy about them, each seeming more or less engaged with his neighbours; the groups blend softly into one another; and throughout the whole there runs a symmetry, unnoticed by any but the well-trained eye, but which is *felt* by all in the perfect order which pervades the composition. As if to balance and relieve the animated and seemingly lawless diversity of arrangement in the multitude of figures on either side, the central group is thoroughly symmetrical,—an arrangement, moreover, admirably appropriate to the Classic and Ideal figures which it is designed to represent. In the centre of that central group, sit aloft in a row—grave, silent, and majestic—the three great masters of Grecian art,—Apelles the painter, Phidias the sculptor, and Ictinus, the architect of the peerless Parthenon. On the broad steps which lead down from their daïs or tribunal, stand four ideal female figures: on the right, the Muses of Greek and Gothic art, and on the left those of Roman art and

the Renaissance. The Gothic Muse, with her long fair hair and tenderly-green mantle, is as beautiful as even Mr Ruskin could desire, and is said to be a portrait of the artist's wife, the beautiful daughter of Horace Vernet; while her *vis-à-vis* of the Renaissance—with her brilliant draperies and half-naked *abandon* of costume, happily represents the mingled beauties and excess of modern Art. Beautiful, bold, half-undraped, "robes loosely flowing, hair as free,"—with jewelled bracelets on her full rounded arms, and with a sort of luxurious grandeur in the *pose* and physiognomy,—she well symbolises that style of art which Bramante, Michael Angelo, Paul Veronese, and Rubens carried out with such a prodigality of talent, and such a splendid license. In the front and centre of this group is a half-kneeling female figure, youthful and Oriental in her cast of beauty,—the genius of Art; with wreaths and garlands beside her, which she is about to bestow upon the most worthy. The whole of this group, as we have said, is highly symmetrical,—forming very nearly a *living arch*, of which the line formed by the three Greek figures is the base, the four ideal figures the sides, and the kneeling Genius the connecting keystone.

To the right and left of this central group—which is half separated from the rest by the limits of a semicircular recess—spread (nearly eighty in number) the leading artists in Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture, who flourished from the beginning of the thirteenth to the close of the seventeenth century. Next to Phidias—that is to say, immediately to the right of the central group—are the sculptors; next to Ictinus, or immediately to the left of the central group, are the Architects. The Painters (who are as numerous as both the other classes united) are divided into two groups, forming the wings of the picture,—a most judicious arrangement in all respects; and not least so because, in a pictorial point of view, the figures of the great painters give a strength to the wings of the composition which the more humble and less known figures of the

sculptors and architects (who are judiciously placed in an intermediate and subordinate place) could never have imparted. On the extreme left are the great Colourists,—prominent among whom are Titian, Rubens, and Rembrandt; on the extreme right, those who excelled in purity of design and grandeur of thought,—grouped around Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael, and Michael Angelo. There they appear, those old masters in the Arts,—the sculptors and architects comparatively sombre, or even poor in their dress; while the painters are conspicuous, as was their wont, for the splendour and rich colouring of their attire. There sits Rubens,—betraying, by attitude and costume, his double importance as painter and ambassador. There stands Titian,—erect, and portly in his red velvet mantle, discoursing upon the secrets of his art. There, too, is Rembrandt, with a muddiness of colouring about him aptly expressive of his style of painting. Away to the right appears the beautiful face and figure of Raphael, advancing in his delicately-blue silk mantle, lined with white,—a being as fit to excite the emotion of love as he was capable himself of experiencing it. There, also, robed in his furred cloak, reclines the noble old man Leonardo, a proficient alike in science, poetry, and art; while—at once painter, sculptor, and architect—the stern old Michael Angelo sits solitary in the midst of that multitude of his brethren, disdainfully absorbed in his own thoughts.

The prize-room is semicircular (hence its name, *l'Hémicycle*). On public occasions, the Professors occupy the straight end, or diameter, of this room; and the pupils are seated fronting them on concentric semicircular benches, rising gently one above another. Above the last of these tiers, rises the expanse of the wall, covered by this magnificent painting,—its central group being, of course, immediately opposite the Professors, and the wings of the picture curving forward towards them along the semicircular sides of the room. The idea of the painting, therefore, is,—that the distribution of prizes to the Art-students should take place, as it were, in presence

of a Congress of the great masters of past ages; and that, as if in token of their approval, the kneeling Genius of Art should appear as if throwing her wreaths to the successful competitors. A fine idea, certainly, and admirably executed. The space covered by the painting measures not less than fifty feet in length, by about fifteen feet in height. The figures in front are colossal; those farther removed are life-size. The whole is lighted up by a broad daylight from above; and the lights and shades in the picture are made to correspond with this arrangement of the natural light. All the figures in the composition are still; the animation is entirely in the expression and attitude, which gives to the multitude of figures "a sort of Elysian repose, befitting an assemblage of beings who belong no more to this noisy changeable world, but to one all peaceful, all divine."

On contemplating this Ideal Congress of Artists, and beholding such vast diversity among them—as to aspect, country, station, temperament, and time,—some rich, some poor—some from the Court and some from the cloister,—a galaxy of Christian artists arrayed around a central constellation from the Pagan ages of Greece,—the questions naturally suggest themselves: What is the exciting cause of national genius in the Fine Arts? Why is one age barren of the beautiful, and another redundant? And why do the antipodal eras of Science and of Poetry keep revolving round one another, each coming in sight by turn,—like those diverse-coloured twin stars first seen by Herschel, which now loom purple upon the star-gazer, and now green?

In attempting to solve the problem thus suggested, it must be borne in mind—if we would not overstep the modesty of truth — that Genius, like all the other manifestations of Human Nature, is eccentric in its development. Sometimes its stars come in clusters, thick and bright as the Milky Way,—in which cases the primal source of the inspiration may probably be detected. Genius is then epidemic, and

a cautious analyst will be able to discover the germ of the divine contagion in the history and complexion of the times. Now and then, however, at distant intervals, a great man will arise, whose inspiration comes one knows not whence, save wholly from within,—frequently giving rise to a school of followers; yet, it may be, passing away in isolated grandeur, —a Melchisedec of art, "without father, without mother, without descent." Nevertheless, *generally* (and this is all that need be attended to, for it is only theorising run-mad that would attempt to frame a rule to meet exceptions), great men come in clusters; and wherever there is seen a generation excelling in POETRY—of which the Fine Arts are just an embodiment, or material expression,—I venture to lay down as a principle, that that generation will be found to have grown up within the shadow of great events, and to an inheritance of noble and exciting recollections. The ages in which the Fine Arts have flourished will be found to be emotional ones,—epochs not of violent action, but succeeding to violent action,—not so much of war, for example, as of the first years of peace—an elated Present following a troubled Past; when the mind, released from the stormy pressure of the Actual, yet still surging with emotion, involuntarily throws its energies into the realms of the Ideal, and finds vent for its excitement in the creation of works of Art.

Compare this theory with the facts of History. Was it not the great wars between the rival sections of the Aryan race in India, and their victorious struggles with the aboriginal populations, which raged throughout Hindoo-land for a long series of years,—contests which rise like a huge mist-covered background to Indian history, and which terminated, it has been thought, by casting forth a wave of emigration that reached to the shores of the Mediterranean,—was it not the dying excitement of this great struggle that inspired, and its memories that furnished the incidents of the two grand epics of ancient India? Was it not the wars of Troy that produced the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, the first

poetic outburst of the Hellenic race? And was it not the wild excitement of the Persian invasion,—the memory of Thermopylæ—the victories of Marathon, Salamis, and Platæa, that in the generation following produced the brilliant efflorescence of the national genius of Greece, and the sudden heyday of Hellenic art,—Æschylus, Sophocles, Euripides,—Phidias and Ictinus,—Zeuxis and Parrhasius, and the other artists who rendered illustrious the age of Pericles? Finally, was it not the stir of the Crusades that helped to arouse the slumbering genius of Europe from its long sleep during the Iron Age? And may I not add, in a modified sense, that it was the religious wars which convulsed Europe, at the birth of Protestantism, that revived Poetry in *Literature*, as the Crusades had revived it in *Art*? Or, turning from the World's phases to those of Nations, I might point out that it was in the reign of Queen Elizabeth—when the long wars of the Roses and the religious dissensions of England were finally over—that the excited mind of the nation first threw itself into the realms of the Ideal, and inaugurated the golden age of English literature. A similar phenomenon took place in France, when the protracted civil and religious wars of that country were finally closed by the brilliant autocracy of Louis XIV.,—though in this case on a much smaller scale, owing chiefly to so much of the national talent being absorbed by the external wars. Finally, to what was the great outburst of Poetic and Imaginative literature in our own country, in the last generation, due, but mainly to the terrible stirring of the national heart by the grand Continental war with France, and the astounding convulsions of which our fathers were beholders or partakers?

A single word in explanation of this phenomenon. In times of long-continued peace, the eye of nations (as, in solitude and calm, the eye of an individual) is turned *inwards*. Reflection ensues, expressing itself in Science and Philosophy, —and giving birth to questions and principles, which by-

and-by, embodying themselves, give birth in turn to fresh troubles. This is what the Germans call the *subjective* state of the human mind. But break this peace—make stirring events to sweep before the national eye—make perils to threaten, or glory to entice us,—and then, aroused by the pressure of external circumstances, the mind of the nation, like an awakened day-dreamer, turns its glance from the mental shapes within to the realities without. And, as external circumstances can excite the mind more powerfully than the contemplation of its own thoughts (for a thing can never act on itself with the same force as it is acted on by other objects), the heart of nations is manifestly in far more lively action during periods of external commotion than in times of tranquillity. WAR is the greatest and most impressive of all commotions or convulsions,—it is the climax of them all; and therefore it is during war that the human soul is most vividly agitated,—that it becomes most forgetful of itself,—that it throws itself most thoroughly into the *objective* state,—or, in other words, passes most completely from the state of Reflection into that of Sensation, and from the sphere of Intellect and Criticism (or analysis) into that of Instinct and imaginative Creation.

Let not these remarks give any offence to the worthy members of the Peace Party. I am simply stating facts, and not presuming to say whether it is desirable that such things should be. I am simply looking upon War as the strongest exciter of the human mind,—as the climax to all inferior forms of national commotion. But, on this very account, there is a grandeur and splendour about war which will be sought for in vain elsewhere. "Everything connected with war," says Mr Ruskin—who is as eminently Christian a writer as lives—"is *beautiful*." And in so saying he expressed a general truth. In that grandest of all strifes, the combat is no longer carried on through the medium of dead books, or of the living voice, nor merely with the powers and

resources of inferior nature; but by Man himself, wielding the powers of subject Nature as his subordinate allies. The chess-player moves his lifeless pieces,—the huntsman guides his hawks, his hounds, or his elephants; but the General wields battalions of living men—fights with the strongest embodied powers that the world has. And, woeful as its actualities may be, the strife itself, and the issues which hang upon it, are of the grandest and most momentous kind. It is the fate of Empires, the life and death of Nations, that are there at stake. It is Patriotism or Religion—the love of country or the rights of conscience—that urge nations to the strife; and what but courage and self-devotion are the principles that reign supreme over the dread battle-field? Even when the strife is not one of Opinion—in which case both sides believe themselves equally right,—even where pure Aggression is the cause of strife, and a Xerxes rushes with his myriads to a Marathon or Platæa; still there is the love of power and the glory of triumph, in their grandest forms, animating the one side; and warlike Patriotism and the love of Liberty—the crowning phases of national life—meeting them in determined conflict, on the other. War, be it remembered, is not all horror,—else it would stand alone, as a thing without a fellow in God's universe. It is not only the great quickener of the national pulse, but—like Suffering in the moral world—it is the great purifier of the national heart,—especially from the canker of the selfish passions. It not only transcends all other forms of strife in grandeur, as much as the thunder and lightning of heaven transcend the shocks and flashes of a chemist's laboratory; but it serves the same purpose among the kingdoms of earth as electrical explosions in the realms of air. The scourge of war regenerates the nations, who, ever and anon, "settle on their lees," even as the sweep of the thunder-storm purifies the stagnant atmosphere. Both, too, startle and awe the slumberous human soul;—the wrath of man, as well as the war of the elements, being made by the Omniscient to

praise Him, by proclaiming aloud to the forgetful nations that the LORD GOD reigneth!

It is from such epochs of dread convulsion that the human mind starts afresh on its career,—that it enters upon a new cycle (not perhaps of Knowledge, for that is, comparatively speaking, steadily progressive), but of psychical conditions: beginning once more with the reign of Instinct and sensuous emotion—a second *youth*,—and gradually sobering down again, after years of internal peace and little foreign war, into that state of Reflection and introspection, which is the mark of Age alike in men and nations. It is generally in the first generation or two of such new epochs that Poetry and the Arts more peculiarly develop themselves,—although the period may be longer or shorter according as the transition from action to repose be rapid or gradual, continuous or interrupted. In the case of the Italian Republics of the Middle Ages, the transition was gradual and the Art-fervour long,—being kept alive by the light intermittent wars and constant rivalry between the various liberty-loving States of the Peninsula. But in the recent case of our own country, we sank down so instantaneously into perfect peace after Waterloo (the victory was so thorough, and Europe so exhausted), that the poetic inspiration died away suddenly with the generation that had witnessed the Great War. What a burst, and what a sudden decline! Scott, Byron, Southey, Moore, Wordsworth, Wilson, Coleridge, Shelley, Keats,—and then twilight, if not darkness! It is to be observed, as characteristic of the times, and illustrative of the theory which I propose, that we have now [1853] only two great *objective* poets—two poets of action and energetic emotion—Aytoun and Macaulay; and that the latter of these great artists belongs rather to the past generation than to the present. In almost all the other brethren of the lyre, the *subjective* vein predominates. Theirs is the poetry of reflection, of introspection. It is no longer the outer world of Action, but the inner world of Thought, from which they

chiefly choose their subjects. Poetry, in short, is now becoming *metaphysical.* Search our current literature, and then say if it be not so.

Such is the cycle in which the Mind of Nations moves, and such the peculiar phase of Poetry which the present age has reached. Far be it from me, in a spirit of one-eyed wisdom, to depreciate this school. On the contrary, it possesses greater attraction for me than probably for most people. Nevertheless, I venture to affirm, that this metaphysical poetry is Poetry *in its last stage.* It cannot travel much farther into the cold clear regions of pure Thought, without becoming attenuated, chilled, *dead.* The present analytic spirit of the age—the spirit which searches into, and takes to pieces everything, in order to *know* it—is the death of poetry; for it supersedes Imagination and Emotion, which give to poetry its bright shapes and glowing spirit. Moreover let it be borne in mind, that the more poetry turns from the objective to the subjective,—the more it turns from the idealising of Action to the beautifying of Thought,—or in one word, the more metaphysical it becomes, the less hold it takes on the public mind, and the narrower its circle of appreciators. All men understand energetic action, and its appropriate emotions; but as soon as the poet forsakes Narrative and takes to Reflection, he loses half or three-fourths of his readers. Man looks everywhere sooner than within: and of all the phenomena of the world, those of which ordinary mortals know least are the phenomena of their own mind. Poets should remember this. All the masters of the lyre—in perfect accordance with our theory, which holds that an objective state of Sensation and Emotion is the true soil for poetry,—all the poets whom the world has pronounced Great, have dealt chiefly with action and narrative; and their works, accordingly, appeal almost as strongly to the illiterate as to the learned,—to the humble as to the high in station. Homer, Tasso, Byron, Scott, and we may add,

Aytoun and Macaulay, have done this, and done it unconsciously, instinctively. But the vast majority of our contemporary poets—catching the reflective spirit of the age—compose very differently. The cry so often heard nowadays—"Oh, this is a poem for the closet,—or a drama for the closet," is just a confession that the works in question do not appeal, like those of the great masters, to the catholic feelings of our nature, but to faculties developed only in a few. Some of the best poetic writers of the day, in fact, are rather *beautiful thinkers* than poets. They do not create, so much as beautify, illustrate, and expound. All honour to them!—they have few greater admirers than myself; but, be it confessed, until the Age turns over a new leaf, we shall have few more names of great poets to inscribe in our annals.

And when Poetry languishes, Fine Art dies! Thanks to the eccentric development of the human mind, which ever and anon throws us a Genius—a Noel Paton, or any other name that the reader may prefer—to redeem the barrenness of the age, such a calamity has not yet befallen us,—although most certainly Fine Art is at a low ebb. But—mark this,—the tide is on the turn; although the next generation, and not we, must be the spectators of the result. On the face of Europe there are signs of coming change, and war, and the tossing of the mind of nations more fervently than even during the last grand struggle. The curtain of the Future is rising upon a gigantic strife between Liberty and Despotism,—Liberty combating for life with the battalions of Autocracy. But when that Storm shall have rolled past,—when the Nations spring once more to their feet, and a breaking of fetters is heard all over Europe,—when the peoples split themselves no more into artificial *king*doms and *prince*doms, but unite in enduring communities of *Race;* and over the length and breadth of the renovated land goes up a Pæan of joy and triumph,—a Psalm of the free—a song like that of Miriam and the Israel-

ites on the shores of the Red Sea; may we not expect that then, as ever before, Poetry and the Arts will burst forth in splendour,—as brightly and joyously as when united Greece rolled back the myriad billows of the Persian Invasion; or as the Muse of Europe sprang rejuvenated from her long sleep, to listen to the bursting clarion and sweeping chivalry of the Crusades.

1853.

BATTLE OF THE STYLES*

ARCHITECTURE

As an art-critic Mr Ruskin is most generally right, but as a theoriser upon art, he is almost as invariably wrong. We make neither of these statements, it will be observed, unqualifiedly, but we believe them true in the main. As an art-critic, his only defect—and it is a great one—is his bigotry. He is utterly intolerant of any school of art, or kind of beauty, save that which (we do not say erroneously) is deemed by himself the best. In his praises we delightedly agree, but from his censures we have often to dissent. He cannot hold the truth in moderation, and in its integrity. It will not satisfy him to hold that his own favourite schools of art are excellent, but he must prove that every other is utterly and essentially bad.

The most remarkable proof of this æsthetic bigotry is his wholesale condemnation of Greek architecture. Now, that Mr Ruskin's favourite Gothic architecture, in its best form, is not finer than the Greek, we will not assert. It is certainly superior in this—that it is more expressive than the Greek, more full of life and variety: but there are other points in which the inferiority of the Gothic is equally apparent. The Greeks, following the bent of their national temperament, sought pre-eminently for pure symmetry in their works, and cared little

* Written on the delivery of Mr Ruskin's Lectures in Edinburgh.

for that profusion of ornament and endless variety so much esteemed by the northern Mediæval nations. The great and characteristic difference between the Greeks and the so-called Goths consists in the different use which they made of that negative but most important element of Beauty,—Discord. The Greeks admired beauty pure, with little intermixture of discord or relief,—in other words, with little departure from Symmetry. Pre-eminently intellectual, they desired a beauty which addressed itself peculiarly to the understanding,—whereas the Gothic nations were more taken up with the heart. Intellect predominated in the temperament of the one,—Emotion in that of the other. Hence the pure symmetry of Grecian art was not lifeful and expressive enough for the Gothic nations. For the effect of Symmetry on the mind of the beholder is perfectly to satisfy the intellectual instincts of our nature, and, accordingly, to produce a feeling of repose. A perfectly symmetrical object is understood and admired at once, and, as a drawback, has a tendency to become in course of time insipid; whereas Expression is gained by breaking up this symmetry,—by sacrificing a complete balancement of parts for the sake of obtaining variety,—and thus giving more life and expressiveness to the composition. The tendency of the one is to delight and *satisfy* the mind; the tendency of the other is to delight and *move* it. The same qualities distinguish Greek and Gothic literature, as well as art: Romance, or the picturesque and emotional in fiction, being as characteristic of the literature of the so-called Gothic nations, as symmetry is of the classic compositions of Greece.

Catholic in our tastes, we find no difficulty in admiring both styles,—or, we may add, in condemning both, when existing in imperfection, or out of place. Mr Ruskin ought to bear in mind that both styles may be—*are*—excellent of their kind; and that the style and expression of Art, like those of Thought, vary according to the country that gives them birth. This most certainly does not prevent one national style from being actually better than another; but a neglect of this truth is apt

to produce error in judgment, by leading a critic to pronounce dogmatically that one style of art is excellent and another utterly bad, merely because the one appeals to the predominant quality of his own mind, and the other does not. In such a case he is sacrificing judgment, absolute truth, at the shrine of that narrow undeveloped form of it which he allows to exist in himself. The French, for example, have a good deal of that love of symmetry which characterised the Greeks. They excel in arrangement, in a *lucidus ordo*, and carry it sometimes to an undue extent. So strong is this tendency, even in the vital department of practical politics, that they are always for framing a Constitution which shall be theoretically, intellectually, correct. All must be worked out with the rigid regularity of a mathematical problem, however discordant with existing interests and feelings. In other words, they desire pure symmetry,—often without sufficient attention to variety in details. They must have Form and Rule,—generally with advantage, sometimes to excess. In literature this has especially (and injuriously) manifested itself in their poetry; and even the beautiful edifice of the Madeleine at Paris, with which every Frenchman is enraptured, is somewhat too symmetrical for a Teutonic taste.

Mr Ruskin also talks of the poverty of design in Grecian architecture. He says that the horizontal principle on which it is based is the rudest and most barbarous of all. Here he speaks like a mason,—not like a critic of art. He is looking merely at the difficulties of execution instead of at the actual result: a blunder as great as if we were to think more highly of an acrostic than of an ode of Anacreon's or a lyric of Tom Moore's, in consequence of the one style of composition being manifestly difficult of execution, and the other apparently very simple. But even taking this low mechanical estimate of art, Mr Ruskin is wrong; for if the Greeks built in an easier style of masonry, they employed a magnitude of material (not to speak of its costliness and beauty) quite unknown in Gothic

architecture, which made their method of building as difficult as any man need desire. Blocks of marble 60 or 70 feet long, by 20 broad and 12 deep, are no trifles to suspend in air, upon the summit of lofty pillars like those of Baalbec or Palmyra. Therefore Mr Ruskin's assertion that Greek architecture is based on the very rudest principles of construction, is wholly misleading. The statement may be in one sense true (and in that sense valueless), but in any common-sense and unfantastical view of the matter it is palpably erroneous. Putting one foot before the other is certainly the simplest and most primitive mode of walking, but we have yet to learn that it is bad and imperfect, or that jumping and going backwards are improvements upon it. The march of a triumphal procession would certainly be more full of life and variety were its members to advance in the zig-zag style of a Congreve rocket, meandering from gutter to gutter, or in common parlance, "taking the breadth of the street;" but we have yet to learn that its grandeur and effect are not better manifested in the steady tramp and straightforward movement of the triumphal throng.

There is one most important error or oversight made by Mr Ruskin in his comparative estimate of Greek and Gothic architecture, which we must allude to. He speaks of the superiority of the arched to the horizontal style of building on account of its greater strength. We need not contest the point: the temples of Egypt, and even the Parthenon of Athens, which have respectively withstood the shocks of two thousand and four thousand years—in other words, four or five times as long as any of the Gothic edifices—furnish indubitable proofs of the stability of the ancient horizontal style. But we would say this—and it is a truth which Mr Ruskin would do well to consider,—that there is a majesty about straight lines, a grandeur in the rectangular style of architecture, which not all the pointed arches in the world can give. Let any one look at the exterior of a Gothic edifice, broken into spires and triangles and pointed arches, and then say if there be in it any-

thing to equal in point of grandeur the majestic simplicity of straight lines, as manifested in the old Greek or Egyptian architecture? We say there is *not*.

As we are merely glancing at the leading aspects of the question, we need say no more as to the objective merits of these rival styles of architecture. In all Mr Ruskin's praises of his favourite style we willingly acquiesce, but we totally dissent from his wholesale censures of everything else. Let Gothic architecture stand supreme in richness, variety, and expressiveness; but leave to the Greek the merit of its simple majesty, and of that pure matchless symmetry which has won for it the title of classic. The only defect in Grecian architecture is, that, like the Church of the Madeleine, its symmetry may be accounted too perfect,—that there is too much unity, and too little variety; and hence, that while giving the greatest amount of sensuous delight, it does not sufficiently stir the mind, and call forth a play of thought and emotion. Like the statuary of the Greeks, it is perfect symmetry—calm as their blue skies—steeped in repose. The mind of the beholder is fully satisfied,—the harmony between the outer object and the inner standard, between the proportions of the edifice and the æsthetic instincts of our nature, is complete; and therefore the delight experienced by the beholder is a rapturous calm,—the delight, not of excitement, but of repose.

But when we come to the next point—the subjective view of the question—we find that this very beauty in Grecian architecture is the ruin of it in the eyes of Mr Ruskin. It is the spirit of repose which so distinguishes its productions, that, absurdly enough, calls down upon it the dreadest anathemas to be found in Mr Ruskin's tremendous arsenals of invective. Grecian architecture he declares to be, in addition to all its other bad qualities, a most godless, faithless, heartless production,—the work of an infidel and Nature-hating race. Of course we all know that the Greek temples were built by pagans,—but that is not what Mr Ruskin means. As he himself said

when speaking of the corrupt form of Christianity in the Middle Ages,—"Be it so: still their art was devoted to their religion as it existed." What he means by his moral denunciation of Grecian architecture is, that apart altogether from the fact of its being built by pagans, it is essentially godless, heartless, infidel in its style,—that it has Infidelity branded like a Cain-spot upon its very face. Now, let us ask, Does any one, when looking on the Greek *style* of building (as exemplified equally in a modern Christian church as in an antique pagan temple),—does such a one feel anything like an infidel or godless sentiment excited in his mind? We do not say, Does he usually and sensibly experience it? but, Can he, by the closest scrutiny of the inner man, discover a trace of it? We make bold to say, if he be not previously inoculated with Ruskinism, that he cannot. If he said he did, he might as well say the same of the figures of geometry.

And this brings us to the cause, the root of Mr Ruskin's error. It was not his feelings, his instincts, that first told him that classic architecture was a godless style,—but a play of the fancy, a fantastic spirit of symbolism, to which he is ever prone, and which is constantly leading him to indulge in most erroneous analogies. Greek art, as we have said, was fond of symmetry—a style of beauty based upon geometrical proportion. The luxuriant forms of the vegetable world are not very consonant with this style of beauty, nor, we may add, with the hard solid rigid colourless material of stone or marble; and hence, whenever the Greeks made use of foliage in their architectural ornamentation, they rolled it into regular volutes, or otherwise subordinated it to the requirements of symmetry, —as in the case of the flowery capitals of the Corinthian order. In their friezes (and this is what Mr Ruskin forgets, and what his favourite Gothic builders seldom did) the Greeks delighted in the representation of those noblest forms of nature, men and animals—look, for instance, at the Elgin Marbles; but because they rarely introduced the forms of the vegetable world

into their architecture, and, when they did, always symmetrised them,—or, in other words, took away from them an appearance of life, the reality of which they could not possibly retain in the solid stone, — Mr Ruskin calls this style of architecture meagre and dead, and thereupon builds an analogical process leading to the most astounding results. Here is his process of symbolism. Greek architecture is a dead architecture. Well, —a soul that loves deadness is a dead soul,—a dead soul is a bad soul,—a bad soul is a heartless infidel soul,—and an infidel soul is a godless soul. Greek architecture, therefore, must be a godless architecture! I do not say that Mr Ruskin was conscious of every step he thus took in the ladder of analogy. As his analytic powers are not of the highest order, it is much more probable that he was not, and contented himself with jumping at once to the top by the help of a lively fancy, instead of seeking to make his way up steadily by the assistance of judgment. Once up, however, he experiences not the slightest doubt as to the soundness of the process which placed him there; and, turning round with supreme contempt upon Greek architecture, he pours down upon it a most dreadful volley of adjectives. No words are too strong to express his indignant censure. It is godless,—heartless,—infidel,—bad,—very bad,—DEAD!—dead, in fact, as a door-nail!

This might be all very pretty and interesting in a "Sentimental Journey;" but in works like Mr Ruskin's, which are meant (and in many respects deserve) to be standards in art-literature, such fantastic analogies and erroneous symbolisms are most mischievous. Indeed, so flimsy and unfounded are the symbolic fancies which Mr Ruskin attaches to Greek architecture, that by a similar process of analogy we would engage to prove *anything*. Let us see, for example, how his favourite Gothic style would stand such a fantastic cannonading. Taking Mr Ruskin's own definition of this style, we find that it is exuberantly fond of freedom and variety, and impatient of rule and order: are not these the marks of a licentious, disorderly,

and very-bad-indeed spirit? It is very fond of ornaments,—that is a meretricious spirit. It rejoices in the grotesque,—that is decidedly a most mocking, scoffing, and profane spirit. Any one will allow this who ever saw, on our old Trinity College Church, the rude carvings representing a pack of foxes administering extreme unction to a dying goose. Suchlike profane jests in stone are frequent on mediæval churches. It is, moreover, a most gross spirit, as the sundry indecent figures and postures on these old buildings abundantly testify. And, lastly, it is a most Pagan spirit;—for what are all those grinning monsters and dragons and griffins, but forms taken from the old Pagan mythology of the Northern nations? And possibly you may catch sight, also, of fiends with three-pronged forks operating with great glee upon their victims,—and suchlike purgatorial sketches, in the spirit of those gross unspiritual filthy, *pagan* tortures with which, among better things, Dante has besprinkled his most unchristian Hell. Truly, a most diabolical spirit! Yet this is the style for which Mr Ruskin would have us knock down our New-Town buildings like a pack of cards, and rear them again *more Gothico*. We fear the morals of our good citizens would never be able to withstand the contamination of living, working, sleeping, and walking amidst architecture which (*à la Ruskin*) we have symbolically shown to be of a character so decidedly licentious—meretricious—mocking—scoffing—*profane*—PAGAN—DIABOLICAL!!!

Now, this is nonsense—we allow it, nay, we proclaim it aloud,—but nevertheless it is nonsense quite as good against Gothic as any that Mr Ruskin has hurled, amidst the thunderings and lightnings of his oratory, against Grecian architecture. Would it not be much better, then, if so able a writer were to cut such crotchety corruscations of his fancy, and confine himself to that less pretentious but more useful walk of criticism in which he ever appears to advantage? Or if he will take those high flights, which afford good scope for his fine eloquence, let him at least consult his judgment instead of his

fancy, and henceforth call things by their right names. Let him point out, if he will, how different styles of architecture indicate different styles of intellectual development; but let him beware how he proceeds even in this,—for we know no subject in which a lively fancy is more apt to run riot; and, above all, let him beware of dogmatising about the religious spirit—or rather, we might say, about the theological dogmas—of whole nations and centuries, from the style of working adopted by their artists. Suppose I love the geometrical style of landscape-gardening (and a most beautiful style it is), and you prefer something in the free and mazy style, is it not most absurd that you should call me infidel, heartless, godless, &c., in the true Ruskinesque style of criticism, and that I should retort by symbolically denouncing you as a person of a most tortuous and licentious character? Or, in short, is it to be tolerated that our worthy aunt, and not less methodical grandmother, are to be set down, *à la* Ruskin, as a couple of heartless old unbelievers, because they could not bear to see even a pin out of its place; while our certainly charming, but somewhat over-lively cousins, who can never put by their dresses properly,—who come in from a walk with their bonnets somewhat awry and their curls blown about their face—and are constantly leaving the legitimate contents of their work-basket in all corners of the room,—are to be held as specimens of the only orthodox form of Christianity?

Would it not be infinitely better, then, we repeat, for Mr Ruskin to eschew allsuch fantastic and misleading symbolism, and, contenting himself with the truth, say, that in architecture as in literature, a love of Romance, Expression, and Variety is peculiarly characteristic of the Gothic mind, as Symmetrical Beauty and Intellectual Repose were of the Greek? This, at least, is surely better than to form a sweeping and most fallacious generalisation, and to shock all common sense by calling the one Religious and the other Infidel.

PAINTING AND POETRY.

We have no objection to Mr Ruskin's style as a lecturer,—on the contrary, we admire it. If correct, as he believes himself to be, he is not a whit too dogmatic. The truth cannot be too boldly spoken,—especially by one who, like Mr Ruskin, believes the times wholly out of joint, and who, by the earnestness of his character, is forced to assume the attitude of a reformer. There is something noble in the passage in his last volume, where, noticing the common remark made of him and to him, "Why, if you are right, three centuries of artists must be wrong," he replies steadily and self-assuredly—"*That is precisely what I mean.*" It is not vanity that makes him so speak,—it is genuine earnestness; and the reason that this spirit is so rare nowadays, is just because the vast majority of authors take up their views flimsily and entertain them heartlessly,—seldom light upon a grand idea,—and still seldomer have the earnest courage to face with it a hostile public and three centuries of adverse precedents. Neither is Mr Ruskin a whit too enthusiastic for us. Genuine enthusiasm never springs in a shallow soil, and in its best form it is the result of the engrafting of Earnestness upon Genius. It did one good to see Mr Ruskin standing up in praise and defence of Turner,—resolute that justice should be done to a man to whom justice had *not* been done when alive,—resolute that the artist's works, so long misrepresented, should at length be understood,—and that his peculiar merits should be fully acknowledged. There is a fine spirit in all that Mr Ruskin says, and a manliness in the way he unhesitatingly states his convictions, that engage our respect and admiration. But this must not blind us to the fact that in many cases he is an unsafe guide, and that his earnestness is often wasted upon shadows. Imaginative in his intellectual development, and consequently prone to generalisation, he is yet so unfortunate in the ideas which he assumes as

premises, that his sweeping judgments are often nothing better than misleading half-truths,—all the more seductive, inasmuch as his eloquent fancy therein achieves (for a moment) the difficult task of making a part of the truth appear equal to the whole.

As very often happens in life, Mr Ruskin's greatest faults are related to his greatest excellences. The spirit of Religion leavens all his discourses on Art,—so that even were it possible for any to leave the lecture-room no better judges of art than before, they would at least be conscious that their moral feelings had been elevated and strengthened. But his great sensibility to the religious view of art blinds him (quite *à la Ruskin*) to the due importance of the other points to be considered. He is impatient of correlative truth,—he forgets that Truth, though one, is many-sided; and because he sees that Religion has to do with Art, he forthwith magnifies and extols its influence, and preaches to the public as if Art had no other modifier but Religion, and were an exact index of its purity and power.

In this way, for example, he holds that Landscape-painting is a direct product of Christianity. A most fanciful supposition,—seeing that Christianity had existed for a dozen centuries before ever landscape-painting made its appearance. In this respect, indeed, Landscape-painting would be no worse off than Gothic architecture, which Mr Ruskin likewise fancies he can trace to a source in the New Testament. But in point of fact it is worse; for even during Mr Ruskin's so-called "religious" era of Gothic architecture, landscape was literally kept *in the background*—figuring only as a rude filling up of the pictures of which Man was the subject. It was not till after the era of the "infidel" Renaissance that landscape-painting became a separate study at all,—and that, too, in the hands of Claude, and Poussin, and Salvator Rosa—men whom Mr Ruskin denounces as its evil genii and destroyers. If they were so, it is certainly a singular fact that the art should have been destroyed precisely at the very moment it began to live! And to crown

all, Mr Ruskin's theory demands us to believe, that of all the many landscape-painters who have lived during the last three centuries, there has only been one Christian amongst them,—a very strange one certainly—TURNER: and that all our fathers and mothers and uncles and aunts, who had the misfortune to belong to the last generation, were dead in the faith, save the precious few who were Christians enough to admire Mr Turner's pictures!

The ancient Greeks were not Christians,—as Brother Jonathan says, "that's a fact,"—and accordingly Mr Ruskin, selecting them as victims upon whom to show the power of his theory, charges them with neither knowing nor caring anything about Nature. (By *nature* Mr Ruskin means only that lowest form of it, inanimate nature—such as dead mountains and plains, running streams, and growing vegetables.) None of the pictorial works of the classic ages have come down to us; but, says Mr Ruskin, look at their poetry,—neither Greek nor Roman could describe landscape in verse. We answer, even supposing it were so, this is surely no proof that their inability proceeded from the fact of their not being Christians. But the real point to be observed is, that Painting and Poetry are two very different things, and that Mr Ruskin's remark is founded on a fallacy. Unlike Painting, Poetry is not a fitting vehicle for such descriptions. It is not a good medium for any kind of description which endeavours to place a variety of details simultaneously before the mind. And any poet—be he Wordsworth or who he may—that makes his verse mere transcripts of natural scenery, therein both fails and degrades his noble art. The peculiar province of poetry is the actions and emotions of men,—not a bald imitation of inanimate nature. In fact, the ear can never be made to usurp the peculiar powers of the eye. The eye is made for appreciating a symmetry expanded in Space,—the ear for appreciating a symmetry expanded in Time;—in other words, the one for appreciating *pictures*, of which all the parts exist simultaneously; the other for appreciating *actions*, of which

the parts are successive, and to which, consequently, and not to long descriptions of scenery and the like, poetry (and language generally) ought to be directed. Try the experiment. Describe a beautiful face feature by feature,—eye, nose, lip, cheek, eyebrow, hair, complexion, &c., and you will never succeed in giving anything like a correct idea of it;—it will be merely a lifeless catalogue, an inventory, each item of which is seen in succession by itself, not viewed simultaneously as a connected whole. When describe you must, therefore, in poetry, let it be rapid, generic, *Byronic* description,—dealing not in details, but in comprehensive and suggestive phrases,—and striving rather to awaken the emotion which the scene excites, than to depict its several features. Inanimate nature, in fact, should never be viewed in poetry *per se*, but simply as it affects Man, as symbolising his moods, awakening his sentiments, or as a background to his actions. And no amount of graphic power will ever suffice to make long descriptions tolerable, either in prose or verse, unless there be infused into them the living spirit of human interest.

That Classic Poetry did not indulge in such long Wordsworthian or Lamartinian descriptions, therefore, is very much to its credit. We certainly do not pledge ourselves to the defence *à l'outrance* of Classic Poetry, any more than of Classic Architecture. The descriptive element in it, doubtless, is seldom up to our modern notions,—although Æschylus and Aristophanes are, as Mr Ruskin himself allows, marked exceptions to this. But how erroneous is it to say, as Mr Ruskin does, that the Greeks had no feeling for nature. No feeling for Nature! Why, they worshipped it! What but a love, a glorification, an admiring and adoring worship of Nature was it which led them to give to every fountain, and grove, and stream, and grot, its presiding *Genius loci*,—to people the woods and waters and mountains with nymphs and naiads, with fawns and oreads,—to give a radiant goddess to the rainbow, an Aurora to the morning, a Zephyr to the gentle winds, and, in fine, a god

to every element? The Greeks were so struck with the powers and beauties of Nature that they personified it,—they invested it with a nobler spirit than dead life,—they exalted it into communion with themselves, by imputing to it a nature most picturesquely blended of the human and divine. In one word, they *spiritualised* Nature;—and is that degrading it?

We totally deny that Landscape-painting, or even a love of inanimate nature generally, is in any way peculiar to Christianity. On the contrary, we hold that such a notion gives scope for most dangerous deductions. Whatever Mr Ruskin may fancy, it is a fact that the New Testament is singularly free from allusions to inanimate nature. It is *spiritual* all over. It is Man and his lost Soul, and the grand scheme of Redemption, that form the engrossing theme of its blessed pages. So, also, the frequent allusions to natural objects in the Old Testament are due, not to the tenets of the Mosaic Dispensation, but to that love of nature which characterises the literature of *every* Oriental nation. And, as a proof of this, if Mr Ruskin would like to see such allusions surpassed in frequency, we need refer him—not to the literature of Persia or of other Mohammedan countries, where, as it has been said, "they speak in flowers,"—but simply to the ancient Hindoos, a thousand years and more before ever Christianity was born into the world. For one line of scenic description in the poetry of the Bible, we could give him a page from the old poems of India. What, then, becomes of his theory here? If Mr Ruskin be right, we must come to the absurd and irreligious conclusion, either that the ancient Hindoos were acquainted with the Scriptures, and more imbued with their spirit than the Hebrews, *while one-half of the Bible was yet unwritten;* or else that, altogether independently of Revelation, they were better Christians than any nation, either Jew or Gentile, that has since existed! Here, then, let Mr Ruskin choose,—for, in this dilemma, he must lose either his theory or his religion.

It is to be remarked, too, that it is not *dead nature* that the

Bards of the Bible loved to paint. Not a bit of landscape-painting is to be found in the Bible from beginning to end. It is nature personified,—it is nature in its relation to the Deity. It is Jehovah sublimely making the clouds his chariot, and riding on the wings of the wind; or, more frequently, it is Nature, like a humble slave, hastening to do His will. It is Nature startled and convulsed in presence of its Maker, or rejoicing in the light of His countenance. It is—"the sea saw and fled,—Jordan was driven back,—the mountains skipped like rams, and the little hills like lambs;" or it is the floods lifting up their voices, the wilderness breaking forth into song, and the isles of the sea clapping their hands, because the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth. How lofty this, compared with any mere transcript of inanimate nature! It is Nature sublimed by the presence of Jehovah,—or else imbued with a life of its own, to do His will. And what is this, save generically the same as the personified or deified Nature of the Greeks—which Mr Ruskin abuses without being able to comprehend,—only sublimed by a purer and loftier creed than ever was vouchsafed to the beautiful Pagans of the Grecian land.

Landscape-painting—the love of inanimate nature—we repeat, is not in any way peculiar to Christianity. And were we, following Mr Ruskin's fanciful symbolism, to assign it to any particular form of Religious belief, it would be most decidedly to Pantheism, or still more to Materialism. What was it that (we do not say produced, but) heightened the ancient Hindoo's intense love of nature, but his Pantheistic creed, and the doctrine of the transmigration of souls? He had a tenderness for plants and animals unrivalled in the world,—and why so; save that he believed that a ray of the Divinity lived in every form of nature; and moreover that in every creature, and even in every plant around him, there might be imprisoned the soul of some one whom in life he loved.

No, no, Mr Ruskin! If you are resolved to see a creed in every style or branch of Art, depend upon it, it is not Landscape-

painting that is the peculiar exponent either of Religious feeling or of Christianity. The religious spirit and the Christian spirit (which are not necessarily synonymous terms—as Jews or Mohammedans may be *religious*,—but which Mr Ruskin uses with a most perplexing indiscrimination),—the spirit, we say, which leads to the acknowledgment of God in His works, will ever concentrate itself peculiarly upon that part of nature which is more divine than the rest,—upon living beings, rather than dead things,—and most of all, upon MAN. Man, the noblest of God's works which human eye can see,—made after the very image of God himself,—who alone of all this world's pageantry is destined for immortality,—who can set his foot on the everlasting hills and say, "I outlive you!" Man, lord of the earth, and heir of Heaven,—is there anything in the whole world that can furnish a theme like this?—anything so noble, so beautiful, so divine, for Poet or Artist to lavish his might on, or for the human race itself to contemplate? *Landscape-painting*,—bah!

Mr Ruskin is the greatest literary Cyclop we ever saw. His intellect—rich, noble, eloquent as it is—is pre-eminently one-eyed. In all he looks at, he has an eye but for one thing,—Religion; and by the help of a very lively fancy, and an undiscriminating judgment, he sees it everywhere (as his theory requires) ruling like an autocrat. This will never do. Religion is only one of the many phases of that grand central thing, Human Nature; and, instead of changing the manifestation of all our other faculties, it ought rather to be said to change with them. Were it not so—were Religion really the autocratic power which Mr Ruskin takes it for—would not Christianity have been given in the days of Moses, instead of waiting (as Infinite Wisdom saw fit to do) until Human Nature had been ripened by an enlarged experience, and by the training of the Mosaic ritual? Human Nature, modified by the Circumstances of the Age—such are the twin objects which the Philosopher keeps in view: not (like Mr Ruskin) a single

faculty of our nature, exalted into a fantastic supremacy, and wholly unmodified either by its fellow faculties or by external circumstances. Religion itself changes with the times. Given the same creed and the same amount of religious feeling, we shall often find a very different result. The creed of Christianity was fixed eighteen hundred years ago; yet during that period, Christianity itself has exhibited a hundred phases in outward form, and a ceaseless flux and reflux as to its inner life. The same creed that produced the peaceful and humble Anchoritism of the first centuries, produced also the warlike pride of the Crusades. Christianity pulled down our Gothic cathedrals, as well as built them. The religion which manifested itself in arms by the Covenanters and Huguenots, manifested itself in letters by Pascal and the Port-Royalists. In fine, the same creed that produced the grotesque Legends of the Saints and of St Dunstan and the Devil, and burnt old women and men for witches and wizards, animated also the sublime strains of a Milton and the undying charity of a Chalmers. Evidently, then, given a certain creed and a certain amount of religious fervour, and (unless external circumstances be alike, and human nature at a similar stage of its development) we cannot count upon a certain result. At one time it will show itself in a romantic military fervour, and a Tasso will sing of a Jerusalem Delivered,—now in monasticism, and a Dante will develop in rhyme the mingled beauty and terror of monkish fancies,—now in practical warfare, and a Gustavus Adolphus will bring the military art to perfection,—now blended with democratic passion, and a Cromwell will arise and make a Great Rebellion. Now in a bloody proselytism, and we shall have a St Bartholomew and the wars of the Albigenses,—now in proselytism peaceful, and we shall stand in admiration of a Loyola and a Francis Xavier. Now in the sensual ritual of Romanism, embellished by all the arts,—now by the intellectual worship of Protestantism, which careth for none of these things.

Thus Religion itself is ever changing in its manifestations; and to assume it as a fixed item, an unchanging centre-point, by which to gauge the phases of Art over two thousand years, will never do. Religion, like Science and Art, acts, and is acted upon by the other elements of Civilisation,—(a word which just means Human Nature as manifested in the life of a nation). All the various features of a Civilisation—including its history, science, art, religion, philosophy, and social aspect—are just so many sides of the vari-coloured lamp of Human Nature, altogether change more or less as the central light changes: and thus the change in any one may be an exponent of the change in the others, without being in any way the cause of it. Even in this modified form, we must say, generalisation in history is a most difficult and often impossible work,—for external circumstances may thwart a national tendency in one direction, while they allow it free scope in another. Nevertheless the principle holds generally true, that the various aspects of civilisation—or, as we have called them, the many sides of the Lamp of Human Nature—change with the changing of the central light. At one time that light shines more strongly through one aperture, producing Poetry and the Fine Arts,—then through another, producing Science,—now through a third, developing the arts of war,—now through a fourth, developing the arts of peace. In fine, at distant intervals, that central light itself changes colour; Now burning *red*—*i.e.*, rude, warlike, bigoted, energetic, superstitious, uncalculating—the early epoch of Faith and Force; Now *blue*, or sceptical, prudent, and inquiring—the age of Reason and Discovery; Lastly, *golden*, in "the good time coming,"—when men shall gather from every age and country the scattered rays of truth, and inaugurate the crowning millennial epoch of Earth,—when Truth shall at length be seen without the screen of bigotry, Heaven without the clouds of superstition, Man without the prejudices of caste.

Well knowing the difficulty of correct generalisation in

history, we shall not attempt to dogmatise. But were the not very profitable question put to us,—"Since we do not owe landscape-painting to Christianity, to what do we owe it?" we should not altogether refuse an answer. In his praises of Turner, Mr Ruskin said, "Long before geologists discovered the strata of earth, Turner saw them and painted them." In reality, there is a connection, both in point of time and of character, between physical science and landscape-painting; and in the grand march of Human Nature, there will be seen a sequence which, wholly irrespective of Religion, leads us to these as two of the (as yet) latest developments of civilisation. What has been the course of Science but from metaphysics to physics,—from the Deductive system of inquiry to the Inductive—from the inner world to the outer? So also, what has been the march of Art, but from the divine and human gradually down to the lower forms of nature? What did Homer and Virgil and Ossian,—what did the authors of the old German and Indian poems, (the *Niebelungen-Lied* and the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*) sing of,—but Gods and heroes? What did Sculpture and Painting first depict, but Gods and men? What but Saints and men, and God *in* man, formed the theme of Raffaelle and the grand Italian school? What next, but man himself, in his features and his actions? Historic painting followed, intermingled with religious painting. And then, after these, and last of all, came Landscape-painting. Thus, so far as the world has yet gone (there will be a reaction by-and-by), Natural Philosophy and Landscape-painting are the latest and kindred phases of Science and Art. They have grown together, step by step, with a singular contemporaneousness; and in what age of the world were they ever half so cherished as now? Chemistry, zoology, geology, botany, what are all these but the result of man's mind going out upon the face of the world? So is it likewise with Landscape-painting, —which, we repeat, has no more to do with the doctrines of the New Testament than chemistry or botany has. And let

this be remembered, in preference to the "devout fancies" of Mr Ruskin, that the Deductive or Metaphysical mode of inquiry gave way to the Baconian or Positive, exactly *pari passu* with the growth of Physics and Landscape-painting; and that both of these changes indexed the general turning of the European intellect from Mind to Matter, and from Man to Nature.

To conclude. All history shows that the highest departments of Science and Art were occupied first: God in India and Judea,—man in China,—mind in Greece,—and the Stars everywhere, but especially in Assyria. Taking European civilisation alone, we find as indices of this truth, in ancient Greece, Homer and Æschylus, Plato and Aristotle,—in mediæval Italy, Dante and Tasso, Michael Angelo and Raffaelle,—in England, Shakespeare and Milton, Bacon and Newton. And just as these higher fields are excelled in (we do not say exhausted, for no department of mind will ever be exhausted by the finite intelligence of man), men take to the lower ones. They turn from the old to the new, from the higher to the lower; and thus we have arrived at the age of Landscape-painting. We do not undervalue Landscape-painting;—it is no part either of our inclination or of our theory to do so. We love it, as we think, "wisely,"—not, like Mr Ruskin, "too well." And we shall never consent that he should defame higher and infinitely nobler manifestations of Mind by subordinating them to, or even placing them on an equality with, this last and lowest of æsthetic studies. A copier of lifeless matter, of inanimate nature, to be classed with giants of intellect whose heads touched the skies! An expatiator in the narrow field of landscape-painting to be ranked with men whose genius overflowed all creation! "Shakespeare,—Bacon,—*Turner!*" BAH!

GENIUS AND LIBERTY

NOTHING has been so deservedly dear to the best part of the human race as liberty; nothing has been so longed for, fought for, praised. And yet few things have been so much misunderstood or abused, or have so often been made a cloak for unworthy designs. "O Liberty!—how many crimes have been done in thy name!" was the mournful exclamation of the beautiful and gifted Madame Roland, as she mounted the steps to the guillotine; and never did the free and freedom-loving Englishman regard his favourite goddess so steadfastly as during the recent convulsions in Europe.

The connection between Liberty and Genius is neither forced nor imaginary. It is no mere figure of the rhetorician, giving glitter to his sentence at the expense of truth. Sunshine is not more needful to the flower than liberty is to the growth of genius. Without it the intellectual powers never reach their full development—never put forth that flower of the mind which we call Genius.

All history proves that liberty in a nation—the spirit of nationality—is essential to the development of genius; that genius never springs up but where there exist pride of country and the self-respect of the freeman; and that, where existing, it never survives their extinction. Let us transport ourselves back two thousand years, and take a picture from the annals of Greece. Let us shadow forth, however faintly, that divine

excellence in art which has immortalised the country of Homer and Phidias, and inquire whence it came and how it disappeared.

Serene beneath a cloudless heaven, golden in the light of a mellow sunset, we behold Athens, radiant with temples and statues, smiling from the summit of her Acropolis upon the glittering waters of the Bay of Salamis, and lifting into her calm bright skies a thousand shapes of dazzling marble. On that temple-crowned summit, within the noble walls of the Pantheon, Aspasia and the great and high of Athens are gazing in admiration on the matchless statue of Minerva, just placed on its pedestal; while hard by stand Phidias and Ictinus, surveying calmly, thoughtfully, their newly completed masterpiece, the Temple of the Virgins, the world-renowned Parthenon.—It is the golden age of Sculpture and Architecture.

Yonder the lively impressible Athenians are pouring at midday from the open portals of the Theatre, with heart and soul still vibrating to the wonderful tragedies of Æschylus and Sophocles—the earliest which the world ever saw, and still uneclipsed in their stern colossal grandeur. As the crowd spread themselves over the public square, they are arrested by the ever-welcome sight of a masterpiece of Xeuxis. A picture of a boy and grapes is suspended there for public criticism. So admirable is the limner's skill—thus runs the legend—that the passing birds stoop to peck at the glowing fruit. But beside it hangs a rival effort of painting; and the citizens must decide to which the prize of merit is to be awarded. The crowd gaze curiously upon a drapery which seems to hide it from view. They wonder what loom could produce so soft a texture; colours of such glowing harmony. "Withdraw now your curtain!" exclaims Xeuxis, proud of the tribute which the wanderers of the air have rendered to his genius, and no longer able to control his curiosity. Parrhasius, his rival, smiles triumphantly:—"Xeuxis deceives birds: *I* deceive Xeuxis!" That drapery was the picture!—It is the heyday of Painting.

A crowd in the Agora! The varying robes bespeak the mingling of noble and artisan alike; and that assembly is swaying to and fro with tempestuous impulses—shouting for the supremacy of Athens, demanding the gauntlet of mortal combat to be flung in the teeth of all Greece, and longing, as with the fiery vehemence of youth, to add the sword of Mars to the olive-bough of presiding Athené. But lo, how that surging crowd is stilling! Mark, how the clang of voices subsides! Pericles is mounting the rostrum. Beautiful in form, fiery and comprehensive in intellect,—ever self-possessed, as if the calm of the passionless gods were in his breast,—supreme in wielding the hearts of men to all lofty purposes,—in that hour of a people's frenzy,

> "He called across the tumult,
> And it fell!"

His audience said it thundered and lightened, as they listened to that rolling flashing eloquence.—It is the triumph of Oratory.

But the genius of Greece is rising in beauty everywhere on land and sea,—the blue Ægean, gemmed with the "sparkling Cyclades," bearing, like floating flower-baskets, the Isles of Greece on its calm surface. On the lovely bay-indented shores of Ionia, where the vines are trailing in festoons from tree to tree, lighting the emerald woods with their purple clusters, sits merry Anacreon, singing of love and wine in undying strains. Light-hearted old man, sing on!—until, in luckless hour, the choking grape-stone end at once thy lays, thy loves, and thy life! The lofty strains of Alcæus and Simonides make the Ægean shores to re-echo their undying hatred of tyrannic power; while, on her Lesbian isle, hapless Sappho, weary of a fame that cannot bring her love, leaps from the cliffs of Leucas into the sea; but lives for ever in her country's memory as the Tenth Muse.

Whence came the efflorescence of Grecian genius in the age

of Pericles? The Persians had recently been defeated: a handful of Greeks had overthrown the proud chivalry of Asia; the thunderbolts of Marathon and Platæa had hurled the invading myriads from the Hellenic shores. A shout of exultation and joy arose over the length and breadth of the Grecian land. They were free!—they were a Nation! In a single generation Grecian genius reached its zenith; and in another century it was over—its lustre was past, its light dying. Philip of Macedon first struck down Hellenic liberty on the field of Chæronea; and blow after blow followed, levelling the old Greek pride, crushing the life out of the nation's heart; till at length the haughty Roman strode in, and laid his mailed grasp on all. Such were the antecedents of the heyday of Grecian genius,—such were concomitants of its decline.

Foreign conquest has in all ages been the great extinguisher of national genius. Let us imagine a case near home. Suppose an enemy were suddenly to surprise us. With the first sound of the enemy's cannon, Genius would forsake her studies. She could not see the ideal through the smoke of the foeman's batteries. In that hour of national degradation she would hear alone the voice of Patriotism; but sharing in its fall, would languish, if not utterly expire. Architecture would cease to adorn a land no longer our own; the Sculptor would break his chisel, rather than immortalise the forms of his tyrants; Poetry, shorn of her many-coloured beams, would survive only in elegy, or in degrading effusions in honour of the victorious invaders. Pride would be crushed from the nation's heart.

The noble spirit of independence, which is the accompaniment of all real genius, would find a place no more in the bosom of slaves. The old heroic recollections of the nation, the heritage of centuries of glory, would be swept at once away. The deeds of our ancestors would no longer thrill like a trumpet-call to the heart of the nation, stirring us to emulate their exploits. Present subjugation, present degradation, would sweep in like an obscuring cloud, and hide from us the inspiring vision of

the Past. Take from man his dignity, his self-respect, and you dry up the fountains from which genius flows. Excellence is blasted, though mediocrity may remain. A slave may do his task—may sweat his hour in the gangs of the planter or in the ranks of the despot: but look not there for genius—that is the divine offspring of Freedom alone.

Had not the disaster of Moscow broken the wing of Gallic ambition—had the conquests of Napoleon been handed down unimpaired to his successors,—we should have had too ample corroboration of this in our own day. Democracy in modern Europe has so strengthened the vitality of nations, that they live through a thousand perils that would have crushed the old empires of the world; and it is to this vitality, and the almost superhuman vigour with which these nations resist or fling off the fetters of conquest, that the progress of civilisation has been unbroken among us since the days of Charlemagne. It was Conquest that smothered Civilisation in the old universal empires; it was conquest that successively terminated in each a long career of improvement. The triumphant processions of Victory are always closed with the wan and broken shade of Genius. The grave which closes over Liberty also hides Genius from the upper earth.

Pride of country—national egotism—was far stronger in old times than now. The early nations of the world grew up alone—without intercommunication—without borrowing anything from their neighbours: each worked out for itself its own civilisation. And each accordingly esteemed itself the light of the world, and all other, barbarians. Each hated and despised the other; and to be conquered by the stranger—to see their own glories, their own pride, dashed into the dust, and a people whom they had despised lording it in their palaces, utterly broke the nation's heart.

Nineveh—whose mighty ruins, after the lapse of three thousand years, are astonishing earth's sages—built no more after the rival standards of Babylon were planted on her walls;

and Babylon the Great, which has left its name as a byeword of opulence and splendour, dates its decay from the bloody nocturnal entry of Cyrus and his Persians. From the day when the battle of Arbela struck the diadem from the brow of the second Darius, and the war-cry of the Greeks rang through the streets of Persepolis, art and genius forsook the land of Zoroaster, and the royal cities of Persia began to crumble. Although stately with edifices, second in beauty only to those of Greece, thenceforth no hand was put forth to uphold their splendour; their environs, once made fertile by irrigating streams, grew parched and flinty deserts; and their very sites slipped from the world's memory. Not long ago, a traveller among the barren and waterless mountains of Persia came unexpectedly on a magnificent ruin standing silent and solitary on a deserted plain, with polished stone and broken columns strewing the soil all around. It was the Tchelminar, the Hall of Pillars, —built by the Genii, said the Arabs, amid the lone deserts of Merdusht. But history told another tale; and research made plain to the world that there stood the long-lost ruins of royal Persepolis, the city of the Great King,—that there stood all of its palaces that had survived the frenzied torches of Alexander and the wasting decay of Time.

Look at the wondrous Valley of the Nile; and after the desolation of two thousand years, what do we yet see? A land of ruins! A mass of monuments, reared by Genius for eternity; but enduring in their pride and completeness only while liberty lasted. Recall the scenes of that olden time. The quarries of Silsily teem with sculptors, numerous and busy as swarming bees, carving out gigantic monoliths—Sphinxes, Memnons, and propylæ — from the solid rock. They retire for the night to resume their labour to-morrow; but over that morrow bursts the irresistible Persian. Art, Genius, the whole nation is suddenly petrified, as if by enchantment. To-day you—the steam-boat traveller—stand in those quarries, and believe that the morrow of two thousand years

ago still survives. You see the marks of the very tools with which Genius wrought; you behold her works in various stages; here a rough-hewn Apis, there a finished Memnon, only awaiting the one last blow to detach it from its parent rock. The very tracks of the wheels which had come to transport the statue to Edfou or to Thebes are visible. When Cambyses, flushed with victory, stabbed with his own hand the living sacred bull Apis, and commanded the bones of the Pharaohs to be beaten with rods, he struck to the heart the Genius of the Nile. She could no longer make her land and her gods glorious with architecture; for her deities were proscribed, and her land was the stranger's. The heart of the nation suddenly ceased to beat. Liberty was never resuscitated; Genius had expired for ever.

Even Rome, the iron mistress of the world,—the latest and greatest of the universal monarchies, and which seemed to unite in one the vitality and power of all her predecessors,—even her haughty sons drooped on the fall of the Capitol, on the capture of the Eternal City, on the uncrowning of the Seven-Hilled Queen by the barbarians of the North. Two thousand marble statues, and palaces not less beautiful than countless, stood in her streets, on that dread night when the Gothic trumpet rang through the slumbering city, and her sons started from their effeminate couches only to find themselves slaves. That was the last hour of the old Roman Art. No more statues were chiselled, no more palatial edifices built. The Goth ruled in the Capitol, and Genius forsook her old shrines.

As foreign thraldom extinguishes genius in a country, social slavery smothers genius in the individual. Where there is no breath, there can be no aspirations. The system of caste—which divides a people into sections and ranks, sternly restricting each man in station and pursuit—has at some period or other existed more or less stringently in all parts of the world. In the early dawn of civilisation, such a system, viewed in

regard to Art alone, was indeed advantageous. Printing was then unknown, and letters were a mystery. The interchange of ideas and news, which now permeate every corner of society, had then no existence. No one knew what was going on except in his immediate neighbourhood. In such circumstances, the system of caste was the most likely to obviate the impediments to the preservation and propagation of knowledge in the arts: for the discoveries made by the fathers were thus transmitted directly to their children; and the spread of improvements was comparatively easy among a class, all of whose members were bound together by community of station and employment. But when knowledge is easy of communication, the system becomes pernicious. Knowledge is the life-blood of Genius, and must, when it can, be spread and circulated. When confined to caste of station, Genius droops for the want of freedom. Genius is aspiring, but caste chains it immovably to one station. Genius is impulse, action; it cannot move in fetters. Pent up within the walls of conventional rank, Genius collapses,—her inspirations can only be drawn from the atmospheres of boundless liberty.

Conquest and tyranny must ever be short-lived. A free State always, in the end, lives down a despotism. The latter derives talent from one class only, while in the former it leaps up from all. Even when Liberty is born in blood and nursed on carnage, she is the foster-child of Genius. The extraordinary development of talent by France during her first Revolution, had no parallel among the despotic powers of the Continent. Though the strife was horrible and sanguinary, it summoned every man in France to exertion; while the path to the guillotine was trodden smooth by victims, it threw open the road to honour, and thousands entered. The man who raised himself from subaltern of artillery to the Imperial throne; who beheld the half of Europe beneath the shadow of his sceptre; who wedded the daughter of the Cæsars, and raised around his throne a martial galaxy unparalleled in the

world's history—was the offspring of Liberty; of gory Liberty; such Liberty as makes Genius shine forth with preternatural lustre—but only develops it in a few at the expense of the happiness of the many.

Happily, here in England, freedom sheds her influence unrestrained and untarnished. Genius is not choked by caste. Our aristocracy is ever invigorated from the ranks of the commons. Scores of titled families die out in a century, and their place is filled up with the worthiest of the nation. Be a man the son of a coal-merchant, like Eldon and Stowell—or of a cotton-spinner, like Peel—the path to wealth and fame is ever open to him. A tradesman's son may die on the woolsack. A clerk may rise, like Clive, to be a Governor-General. The fourth son of a country parson, like Nelson, may find a tomb among the great ones in Westminster Abbey. Turn to our Senate; consider its annals for the last sixty years, and say if France, with her triple Revolution, can present a parallel to the genius there developed—if France, stirred to the very dregs by frantic struggles after liberty, can equal the steady glories of a nation inured to freedom.

One word more, and we have done—one word to the student who may peruse these pages—to the young aspirant, who sees Life as yet only through the bright colouring of Youth, or in the unreal guise which it wears to the recluse.

There is a self-imposed thraldom more fatal to genius than the blight of external oppression. Beneath the allurements of passion there lurks a worse than Egyptian bondage. No man ever excelled without the exercise of much self-denial. "To live like a hermit, and work like a horse," is the surest of all roads to fame, and has been the uninviting path trodden by most of those who have risen to permanent renown. True liberty, the liberty which genius demands, consists as much in exemption from the slavery within as from the slavery without. Let the young aspirant ever remember, that whatever elevates man's nature—whatever lifts him above the trammels of earth,

and places him nearer heaven, proportionally elevates his genius: and, on the contrary, that every passion immoderately indulged is a fetter placed on his intellect; that every foolish or guilty loitering in the mazes of pleasure, if redeemable at all, must one day be redeemed at too dear a price. "The Present and the Future are rivals," said Sir Joshua Reynolds to his pupils, "and whoever pays court to the one, must resign the other."

YOUTH AND SUMMER

It is Summer. Day is now at its longest, the season at its brightest ; and the heat comes down through the glowing heavens—broiling the sons of labour, but whitening the fields for the harvest. Like hapless Semele, consumed by the splendours of her divine lover, Earth seems about to perish beneath the ardent glances of the God of Day. The sun comes bowling from the Tropics to visit the Hyperboreans. The strange phenomenon of the Polar day—when for six months he keeps careering through the sky, without a single rising or setting, rolling like a fiery ball along the edge of the horizon, and glittering like a thousand diamonds on the fields of ice—is now melting the snows that hide the lichens, the reindeer's food; and, quivering down through the azure shallows of the Greenland coast, infuses the fire of love and the lust for roaming into the "scaly myriads" of the herring tribe.

On ourselves, the Summer sun is shining, glowing—robing in gold the declining days of July, and taking her starry jewels from the crown of Night,—nay, lifting the diadem from her sable brow, and invading the skies of midnight with his lingering beams. Oh, what a glory in those evening skies! The sun, just set, brings out the summits of the far-off hills sharp and black against his amber light. Nature is dreaming. Yonder sea is calm as if it had never known a storm. It is the hour of Reverie. Old memories, half-forgotten poetry, come floating like dreams into the soul. We wander in thought

to the lonely Greek isle, where Juan and Haidee are roaming with encircling arms upon the silvery sands, or gaze in love's reverie from the deserted banquet-room upon the slumbering waters of the Ægean. We see the mariner resting on his oars within the shadow of Ætna, and hear the "Ave Sanctissima" rising in solemn cadence from the waveless sea. We stand beneath the lovely skies of Italy—we rest on the woody slopes of the Apennines, where the bell of some distant convent is proclaiming sundown, and the vesper hymn floats on the rosy stillness, a vocal prayer.

"Ave Maria! blessed be the hour,
The time, the clime, the spot where I so oft
Have felt that moment in its fullest power
Sink o'er the earth so beautiful and soft;
While swung the deep bell in the distant tower,
And the faint dying day-hymn stole aloft;
While not a breath stole through the rosy air,
And yet the forest leaves seemed stirred with prayer!"

Study is impossible in the Summer evenings—those long, clear, mellow nights, when the Evening Star hangs like a diamond lamp in the amber skies of the West, and the hushed air seems waiting for serenades. The very charm of our Study is then our ruin. Whenever we lift our eyes from the page, we look clear away, as from a lofty turret, upon the ever-shifting glories of a Sunset, where far-off mountains form a purple horizon, and a wide arm of the sea sleeps calmly between, reflecting the skyey splendours. Our heart is not in our task. There is a vague yearning within us, for happiness more ethereal than any we have yet beheld—a happiness which the eye cannot figure, which only the soul can feel: it is the Spirit dreaming of its immortal home. Now and then we pause—the beauty without, half-unconsciously fixes upon itself our dreamy gaze.

"Oh, Summer night!
So soft and bright!"

That air, that lovely serenade of Donizetti's—or rather, which Donizetti picked up from the Italian peasants—seems floating

in the room. A sweet voice is singing it in my ear, in my heart. Ah, those old times! I think of the hour when first I heard that strain, and of the fair creature singing it—with the twilight shadows around us, and her lip, that might have tempted an Angel, curling, half-proudly half-kindly, as "upon entreaty" she resumed the strain. I fall into deeper reverie as I recollect it all—those evenings of entrancement, those days of boyish pain and jealousy. And ever the melody comes floating in through my brain, yet without attracting my thoughts,—a strain of sweetest sounds accompanying the dissolving views which are dreamily, perpetually, forming and changing, gathering and dispersing, before my mind's eye, like the rose-clouds of sunset. Those shapes are too ethereal for the mind to grasp them. Is it a Juno-like form, beneath the skies and amid the flowers of Summer—with Zephyr playing among her golden curls, as she lifts from her neck a hair-chain to yield it to the suit of love! Or is it a zigzag path on a hill-side—a steed backing on a precipice—a lovely girl on the green bank, clinging to her preserver—sinking, swooning, quivering from that vision of sudden death! Who shall daguerreotype those airy shapes? We feel their presence rather than know their form,—and the instant we try to see what we are seeing, they are gone!

We are no bad risers in the morning, but we never saw the sun rise on Midsummer-day but once. It is many years ago, yet we remember it vividly as if it had been this morning. It was from the summit of the Calton Hill, the unfinished Acropolis, the still-born ruin of Modern Athens. The whole sky in the south and west, opposite to where the sun was about to appear, was suffused from the horizon to the zenith with a deep pink or rose hue; and in the midst, spanning the heavens, stood a magnificent Rainbow! A symbol of peace in a sea of blood! As the sun was still below the horizon, the celestial bow was of stupendous size, much exceeding the half-circle. But higher still spread the hemisphere of rosy sky.

There lay the palatial edifices of the New Town, white and still in the hush of early morning; and high above them and around them rose that strange emblem of mercy amid judgment. Such an apparition might fitly have filled the skies of the Cities of the Plain on that woeful morn, the last the blessed sun ever rose upon them;—ere amid mutterings in the earth and thunders in the clouds, the volcano awoke from its sleep, and the red lava poured from its sources of fire,—when clouds of stones and ashes, falling, falling, falling, gathered deeper and deeper above the Plain, and the descending lightnings set fire to the thousand founts of naphtha bubbling up from their subterranean reservoirs,—when a whirlwind of flame shot up against the face of the sky, like the last blasphemy of a godless world; and with a hollow groaning, the sinking convulsed earth hid the scene of pollution and wrath beneath the ever mournful-looking waters of the Dead Sea. The skies of night and morning are familiar to me as those of day, yet never but once did that Heavenly Spectre meet my eye.

As I reached the northern brow of the hill, it wanted but a minute or two of sunrise. In a few seconds a new Day would dawn,—a flake would separate itself from the infinite Future, and be born into the world. I stood awaiting the Incarnation of Time. A flapping wing broke on the solemn stillness. Two rooks rose slowly from the ground, where they had been preying upon the tenants of the turf. Below me, to the east and north, spread out the waters of the Firth of Forth,—not a billow breaking against its rocky islets—its broad expanse of the colour of lead, sombre and waveless, like the lifeless waters of the Asphaltite Sea; while, toiling like an imp of darkness, a small steamboat tore up its leaden-like surface, disappearing behind the house-tops of Leith. The Spirits of Night seemed hurrying to their dens, to escape the golden arrows of the God of Day. In the bowery gardens below me, the birds began an overture as the curtain of the Dawn was lifting. At length the sun shot up into the sky: then seemed to pause for a brief

time,—his lower limb resting on the dark sea, his upper almost touching a bank of overhanging cloud. Pale tremulous rays, like those of the aurora borealis, darted laterally from the orb, shooting quiveringly along the sky, and returning: the waves of Light were ebbing and flowing on the sands of Night. The sea and the slopes of the Calton still lay in the dull hues of dawn; but a strange cold sun-gleam, which one felt instinctively would be shortlived, glittered around me on the crest of the hill, and on the white stone monuments that crown it as with a diadem. Foremost and loftiest rose the noble columns of the National Monument, even in their imperfection the most Grecian of British edifices, standing aloft like the ruins of Minerva's temple on the bluff Cape of Sunium, visible from afar to mariners entering the romantic Bay of the Forth. The glitter which now tinged them with gold was bright and brief as the national fervour which had given them birth. In a few minutes the sun passed up behind the bank of cloud, and nothing remained of his beams but a golden streak on the far-circling edge of the waters.

Fair Summer has come, and the ocean woos us. Breaking her ward, Summer has leapt like a lovely Bacchante to our arms; while men who have been "sighing like furnace" for her, and chiding the dull delay of her coming, now fly from her embraces into the sea—plunge into the haunts of the Nereids. In what "infernal machines" do they go a-wooing! And yet they appear to have every confidence in their natural powers of attraction; the Nereids run no danger of being deceived as to the physique of their human admirers. Queer fishes some of them are, certainly! Only look at yon big fat old fellow, for all the world like a skinned porpoise, floundering and blowing in the shallows like a stranded whale!—while another more modest animal, of like dimensions, floats like cork or blubber in deep water, thumping energetically with leg and arm, and hides obesity in a cataract of foam. Yonder, over the clear blue depths, breasting at his ease the flood, goes the long steady stroke of the practised swimmer,—an animal half-amphi-

bious, seen at times afar off, lifting on the crest of a wave a mile at sea. With laugh and splutter a band of juveniles rub their heads with water in the most approved manner, as if they were a set of old topers afraid of apoplexy; or with whoop and hollo engage in a water-combat, or in a race in bunting that reminds one of running in sacks; while a still younger member of the human family roars lustily as he clings to his pitiless nurse's neck, or emerges half-suffocated from the prescriptive thrice-repeated dip. There is something gladsome in the flash of the waters around the sportive bathers, and in the glancing glitter of the sunbeams on the ivory-like arms that are swaying to and fro upon the blue waters. It speaks of Summer; and that of itself awakens gladness.

As we look upon the earth in a glorious summer-day, we feel as if all Nature loved us, and that a spirit within is answering to the loving call of the outer world. We feel as if *caressed* by the beauty floating around,—as if the mission of Nature were to delight us. And it is so. It was to be a joy for Man that this glorious world sprang out of Chaos, and it was to enjoy it that we were gifted with our many senses of beauty. How narrow the enjoyment of the body to the domain of the spirit! The possessions and enjoyments of man consist less in the acres we can win from our fellows, than in the wide universe around us. Creature-comforts are unequally divided, but the charm of existence, the joy that rays from all Nature, are the property of all. Who can set a price upon the colours of the rose or the hues of sunset? Yet, would the Vernon Gallery be an adequate exchange? Water and air, prime necessaries of physical life, are not more free to all than is its best and highest food everywhere accessible to the spirit. What we want is, to rub the dust of the earth off our souls, and let them mirror the beauty of the Universe. What we want is, to open the nature within to the nature without,—to clear the mind from ignorance, the heart from prejudice. We must learn to see things as they are,—to find beauty in nature, love in man, good everywhere:

not to shut our eyes, or look through a distorting medium. We scramble for the crumbs of worldly success, and too often neglect the higher delights that are free to our taking. Like the groveller in the *Pilgrim's Progress*, we rake amid straws on the ground, when a crown of joy is ready to descend upon us, if we will only look up. We turn aside the river from its bed, and toil in the sand for golden dust,—destroying happiness in the search for its symbol; and forget that the world itself may be made golden, that the art of the Alchemist may be ours. The true sunshine of life is in the heart. It is there that the smile is born that makes the light of life,—the rosy smile that makes the world a thing of beauty, and keeps life sweet,—the smile that "makes a summer where darkness else would be."

We are in one of the pretty lanes of England. The smoke of a great city is beginning to curl up into the morning skies, but the sounds of that wakening Babylon cannot reach us in our green seclusion. As we step along lightly, cheerily, in the cool sunlight, hark to the glad voices of children; and lo! a cottage-home, sweeter-looking than any we have yet passed. Honeysuckles and jessamine wreathe the wooden trellis of the porch with verdure and flowers. In those flowers the early bee is hanging and humming, birds are chirping aloft, and cherubs are singing below. An urchin, with his yellow curls half-blinding his big blue eyes, sits on the sunny gravel-walk, playing with a frisky red-collared kitten. On the steps of the door, beneath the shade of the trellis-work, sit two girls, a lapful of white roses before them, which they are gathering into a bouquet, or sticking into each other's hair. What are they singing?

Come, come, come! Oh, the merry Summer morn!
From dewy slumbers breaking,
Birds and flowers are waking.
Come, come, come! and leave our beds forlorn!

Hark, hark, hark! I hear our playmates call!
Hurrah for merry rambles!
Morn is the time for gambols.
Yes, yes, yes! Let's go a-roving all!

Haste, haste, haste! To woodland dells away!
There flowers for us are springing,
And little birds are singing—
"Come, come, come! Good-morrow! come away!"

A wiseacre lately remarked, as a proof of the sober sense of the age, that no one now sang about the happiness of childhood! *Sombre* sense, he should have said,—if he misused the word "sense" at all. No happiness,—nay, no peculiar happiness in childhood! Does he mean to assert that we get happier as we get older?—that life, at the age of Methuselah, is as joyous as at fifteen? Has Novelty, which charms in all the details of existence, no charm in existence itself? Is suspicion—that infallible growth of years, that baneful result of knowledge of the world—no damper on happiness? Is innocence nothing? Is ennui known to the young? No, no!

Youth is the summer of life. It is the very heyday of joy,—the poetry of existence. Youth beholds everything through a golden medium,—through the prism of Fancy, not in the glass of Reason; in the rose-hue of idealism, not in the naked forms that we call reality.

"All that's bright must fade,
The brightest still the fleetest!"

We have but to look around us and within us to see the sad truth exemplified. Summer is fading with its roses,—Youth vanishes with its dreams. "Passing away" is written on all things earthly. Yet truly, to the soul, "a thing of beauty is a joy for ever." We have a compensating faculty, which gives immortality to the mortal in the cells of Memory; the joys of which Time has robbed us still live on *there* in perennial youth. Nay, more, they live unmarred by the sorrows that in actual life grow up along with them. As the colours of fancy fade from the Present, they gather in brighter radiance around the Past. We conserve the roses of Summer,—let us embalm the memories of Youth.

RECORDS OF THE PAST: NINEVEH AND BABYLON

HISTORY must ever possess an undying fascination for the minds of men; for its subject is the story of our race, and its interest is ever human to the core. Its burden is now a song of rejoicing at the triumphs, or a wail of lamentation over the errors and sufferings, of mankind. How History, in gifted hands, exults as it reaches those blooming points in a nation's career—those eras of Pericles, of Augustus, of Haroun-Alraschid, or of our own Elizabeth,—or, piercing back through the veil of time, discerns with joy the brilliant era of a Vicramaditya in the old world of the Hindoos,—the grandeur of a Rameses, or still remoter monarchs in Egypt—or a rule of then unequalled justice and beneficence extending back for countless ages in the early history of secluded China. And how it saddens to see those old empires pass away!—to behold Rome, and Greece, and Nineveh, and Egypt, Susa and Persepolis, and the grand old cities of India, withered, rolled up like a scroll, and vanishing from the face of the earth. Yet with what quiet hopefulness, with what assured resignation, does it contemplate all those changes. "Passing away," it knows, is written from the first upon the brow of empires as well as of men; and even when the mighty fabrics of human power are seen crumbling into dust beneath internal decay or external assault,—when the stores of knowledge, the monuments of art—in fact, a whole

civilisation—seems rushing into oblivion before an onslaught of barbarism, the philosophic historian, with an assuredness of faith stronger than other men's, knows that the human race is but on the eve of some new and higher development—that all is ordered by One without whom not a sparrow falls to the ground, and that from out of the present chaos will emerge new kingdoms and communities of men, purged from the dross of the old, yet inheriting the larger portion of their wisdom.

> "All changes, naught is lost. The forms are changed,
> And that which has been, is not what it was,—
> Yet that which has been, is."

History has a grand work yet before it,—one which mankind is just beginning to long for, and which will one day be accomplished. History must grow wider in its scope and nobler in its aims as the career of our race advances. It must rise above the colourings of national bias, and the prejudices of particular eras. It must cease—and some day it will cease—to reflect but one phase at a time of that many-sided thing Truth; and will seize and set forth for the instruction of mankind the priceless gem under whatever form it appear, however attired in the strange costume of distant times or foreign countries. It must tell to Man a continuous story of his existence. It must recognise the truth that in all those various nations that have flourished and passed away, there has been enshrined the self-same human soul, which the great Creator made in His own image, and which, however manifold in its aberrations, will still be found, on the whole, to reflect far more of truth than of error.

Nothing is more elevating than the study of the human race through its successive phases of existence. Therein is to be discovered the scheme of God's Providence among the nations, slowly raising the race from one stage of progress to another and higher. The world advances slowly,—but still "it moves!" Severed into distinct nations,—secluded behind mountain chains, deserts, or seas, each section of mankind has been left

to develop a civilisation of its own,—forms of government, religion, art, science, philosophy, more or less peculiar to itself. Through long ages this birth of Nations has been going on, each learning for itself the lessons of life. And each of those nations, whether ancient or modern, has attached itself in a peculiar manner to some one of the many forms of truth, carrying it to greater perfection than the other sections of the race. Every one knows that such was the case among the Greeks, the Romans, the Egyptians, the Hebrews,—but do not let it be supposed that the wisdom of the ancient world ends here. Do not suppose that nothing is to be learned from the old history and writings of China—that land where social ethics and utilitarian science were first carried to comparative perfection; or from the ancient Hindoos, who first pre-eminently devoted themselves to the study of the spiritual nature of man, and in whose lofty speculations may be found the germ of almost every system of philosophy, whether true or false, to which the European world has given birth. Hegel and Spinosa are but Hindoos reviving in the eighteenth century. Auguste Comte, with his boasted new science of Positivism, is but a systematiser of the doctrines of Confucius and the old philosophers of China. And what are magnetism, clairvoyance, and suchlike researches at present making into the spiritual powers of man, but unconscious repetitions of what has been known or imagined in India for three thousand years?

Had the human race formed from the first but one nation—swayed by but one great impulse, and enlightened but by its own single experience, how comparatively stationary would have been the condition of the species! But, severed into separate communities, each seeking truth for itself, and, as intercommunication became wider, comparing its experiences with those of its neighbours, the march of mankind has been greatly accelerated. There have been a hundred searchers after truth instead of one. It is only now, however, in these latter days, that mankind are beginning to perceive and reap the advantage

of the beneficent scheme of Providence which has so long kept them secluded in location and antagonistic in feeling. It is in those days of running to and fro upon the earth—when commerce, and railways, and steam-navigation are uniting the most distant regions—that the varied stores of knowledge which have been accumulating in private hoards through long centuries are now being thrown into general circulation. The more advanced nations are teaching the less enlightened. But the gain is not all on one side ; and the former will be unworthy of their high position, if they fail to perceive in how very many things they may receive instruction from those whom they regard as their inferiors. The whole tendency of the rapidly-increasing communication between the various nations and countries of the earth is to shake men loose from local prejudices, and, by expanding the mind, to fit it for the reception of that pure and entire truth, towards the attainment of which the human mind is journeying, and to which the matchless plans of Divine Providence are slowly but surely conducting the human race.

To the eye of the philosopher, the world is a prism through which Truth is shining ; and the nations are the various colours and hues of the spectrum into which that light is broken. Hitherto mankind, split into sections, has only exhibited those scattered and disunited, but brilliant, rays,—truth refracted and coloured by the national mind through which it passed ; but now, in the fulness of time, the process is being reversed. The long training of isolated nations is drawing to a close ; the barriers of space or feeling which shut them in are being thrown down ; an interchange of intellectual as well as of material benefits is commencing ; and the dissevered rays of partial knowledge are beginning to be reunited into the pure and perfect light of truth.

Let, then, some Newton or Humboldt of history—some one who grudges not a lifetime of genius to the task, and to whom Providence may give length of days,—let such a one take up

the theme of those old nations. By the might of his graphic pen let him evoke them and their crumbled empires from the dust, and place them in their pristine glory before the eye of the reader. Let him paint the people, the land in which they dwelt, the temples in which they worshipped;—let him glance with graphic touch over the leading points of their history, the master-spirits who influenced, and the poets who adorned it;—let him depict the arts of life and the arts of beauty which characterised them; and, hardest task of all, let him dive into the depths of their religion and philosophy—not the fantastic crust of superstition, but the more spiritual dogmas which lie below; and, wasting but little time upon what was false, set himself to eliminate the true, and place it once more before the world.

In this way let him paint the Chinese, stout, square-set, and supple,—ever labouring contentedly in their rice-fields, and delighting in social intercourse; but also, with a free and martial spirit, of which the world is now incredulous, repelling with slaughter the nomade hordes of Central Asia which subsequently overthrew the mighty empires of the West. Let him depict the country covered with district-schools, and the people trained in social morals by a Government system of education, centuries before the birth of Christ. Let him set forth the practical good sense and kindliness of spirit which characterise the inhabitants of that vast empire, as well as their eminence in the social and industrial arts of life; yet glance with brief but warning words at the materialistic tendencies, alike in creed and practice, by which those good qualities have been in some degree counterbalanced.

Or turn to the Hindoo, with his slim and graceful figure, symbolising the fine and susceptible spirit within. See him among the flowery woods, luxuriant vegetation, and countless sparkling waters of the Indian land,—so spiritual and alive to the impressions of the external world, that he feels bound in lively sympathy with every living thing around him, whether

it be beast or bird, tree or flower,—and in the faith of the most imaginative pantheism that the world ever saw, regarding himself and all created forms as incarnations of the Deity, animated directly by the spirit of the great Creator; and, a firm believer in the transmigration of souls, regarding every object around him with plaintive tenderness, as possibly the dwelling of the soul of some lost friend or relative. See him under his master-sentiment of love. That passion, almost universally in the ancient world, was a mere thirst of the senses; and the few instances in which it figures in the literature of Greece and Rome, it is made to strike its victims like a frenzy. But among the Hindoos we perceive it often sweetened and refined by sentiment,—a spiritual as well as a sensuous yearning,—purer, as ardent, more pervading than the love-passion of contemporaneous nations. And the same spirituality of nature which made the Hindoo thus, fitted him also for the subtlest and loftiest flights of speculation,—savouring little of the utilitarian, indeed, but tending to gratify the soul in many of its highest and purest aspirations. Caste, unknown in China, was in India all-prevalent; and there, also, we meet in its sternest form that spirit of devoted asceticism, by which the mystics of the East, and subordinately in the Christian Church, have striven to exalt themselves above the level of humanity, by extinguishing all earthly passion, and so drawing into nearer communion with the Deity.

Or pass to Egypt, and behold the now desolate valley-land of the Nile reinvested with its old splendour and fertility. Let a thousand irrigating canals spread again over the surface, reclothing the land with verdure; while up from the sands spring miles of temples, pyramids, and endless avenues of sphinxes, obelisks, and gigantic statues. Let Thebes with its "hundred gates," its libraries, and stately palaces,—and Memphis with its immense population, whose bones are still seen whitening the desert sands whereon the city once bloomed amidst verdure,—reappear with crowds of artisans and professional men, carrying

the division of labour almost as far as it is done in modern times; while, all around, a rural population is tending herds or tilling the thrice-fertile soil; and, wearily and worn, innumerable bands of captives — Nubians from the south, Negroes from the desert, Arabs from across the Red Sea, Syrians and Assyrians from Euphrates to the foot of Mount Taurus—are toiling in digging canals, in making bricks, or in quarrying, transporting, or raising to their place, those huge blocks of granite which fill with astonishment the engineers of our own times. Turn from all this pomp and bustle and busy hum of life, along that silent mile-long avenue of double sphinxes; and, passing beneath the stupendous ornamented portals of Karnac or Luxor, or some other temple of the land, enter the vast halls and countless apartments devoted to sacerdotal seclusion,—where the white-robed priests of the Nile, bathing three times a-day to maintain mental purity and calm, engaged in the abstract sciences, or searched deep into the secrets of nature for that magical power by which they fascinated and subjugated the minds of the people, and which enabled them to contend on almost equal terms with the divinely-commissioned champion of the Hebrews.

Or turn the eye northward, and see the Persian preparing to descend from his mountains and conquer the world. Verdant valleys amidst sterile hills and sandy plains are his home, —blazed over by a sun to whose bright orb he kneels in adoration as an emblem of the Deity. Hardy, handsome, chivalrous, luxurious, despotic, and ambitious,—yet animated by a spirit of justice, and by a religious belief so pure as at once to sympathise with that of the Hebrews, and to win for the Persian monarch the title of the "Servant of God;" they are the first in history to exhibit a nation, few in numbers, but strong in arms and wisdom, lording it over an immense tract of country, and over subjugated tribes—Syrians, Assyrians, Asiatic Greeks, and Egyptians—of diverse origin and customs from themselves. The iron phalanx of Alexander at

length caused this empire of satrapies to crumble into the dust; but under a new dynasty it revived again, so as to wage war successfully even with the all-conquering legions of Rome.

Away, around the shores of the lovely Ægean—on the sunny slopes of Asia Minor, among the sparkling vine-clad islets of the Cyclades, and on the rocky picturesque bay-indented peninsula of Greece, the gay and martial Hellenic race disported themselves. As a race, young, imaginative, superstitious, and enamoured of the beautiful, they ascribed every phenomenon in nature to the action of a god,—peopled the woods, the hills, the waters, with graceful imaginary beings sympathising with and often visible to man, and filling even the highest heaven with divinities who were gods but in power, and wholly men in passion. Keenly alive to pleasure, and hearing little of the deeper voices of the soul, their thoughts clung wholly to the beautiful world around them; and, while acknowledging the soul's immortality, they ever looked upon Elysium, their world beyond the grave, as a shadowy land where joy becomes so diluted as hardly to be worth the having. The greatest poets the world ever saw, they embodied their conceptions, alike in literature, in architecture, and the plastic arts, in forms of such divine beauty, that after-ages have abandoned in despair even the hope of rivalling them. The story of Greece is not easily told; she excelled in so many departments of human effort—producing almost simultaneously an Alexander, a Socrates, a Plato, a Demosthenes, an Aristotle—not to speak of a Democritus, a Thales, an Anaxagoras, and others, in whose daring but vaguely-framed systems of the universe are to be found not a few brilliant anticipations of world-wide truth, which modern science is now recovering, and placing on the firm and only definite basis of experiment.

Add to the story of these nations that of the Romans—the great conquerors and legislators,—the story of a city that came to throw its chains over the world,—and thence pass over the dying ashes of Paganism into the new world of Christianity,

and to the congeries of kingdoms which arose under its beneficent sway in mediæval Europe, at first small, and never presenting those great contrasts so observable in the old empires of Paganism, but each telling its lesson to those who study it, and some of them already influencing the fortunes of the human race to an extent never possible or dreamt of in prior times. The "meteor-flag" of England is the great object which, in these latter days, arrests the eye of the philosophic observer,—bridging over the seas, peopling continents and islands with civilised man,—and carrying the science, the religion, and the beneficent sway of Great Britain over an empire upon which the sun never sets, and to climes "where Cæsar's eagles never flew."

Paradoxical as it may seem, the further we recede from the era of those old nations, the better able are we becoming to write their history and understand their civilisation. Not only are mankind becoming tolerant of truth in whatever attire it present itself, and thus learning to sympathise with, and so comprehend, those old forms of civilisation, but the recent study of the languages of India and China has opened up to us the literature and life of those old countries. The discovery of a clue to the hieroglyphics of Egypt, to the rock-inscriptions of Persia, and to the arrow-headed chronicles of Assyria, constitutes a series of unexpected triumphs, which promises to rend the veil of oblivion from the face of those long-perished empires. Lastly, the earth herself has been giving us back their skeletons. Two old Roman cities, Herculaneum and Pompeii, accidentally discovered, have been cleared of their superincumbent mass of lava and ashes, and given back to the light precisely as they stood on the day when the eruption of Vesuvius overwhelmed them eighteen hundred years ago. Into those long-buried streets we have descended, and seen the domestic civilisation of imperial Rome mirrored in those hastily-abandoned boudoirs and dining-rooms, baths, temples, and public buildings. In the wastes of Persia, Chardin stumbled

upon the ruins of imperial Persepolis, whose very site had for ages dropt out of the world's memory. The thousand monuments of Egypt have been studied, their historic sculptures and mural paintings magnificently copied, and a portrait-gallery published of its ancient dynasties. Finally, Layard and Botta have carried the thirst of discovery to the banks of the Tigris and Euphrates, and have exhumed from the mounds of long-lost Nineveh striking and instructive vestiges of the first of the so-called "universal" empires.

The opportuneness of these revelations of the Past cannot but strike one as remarkable. Knowledge revealed too early is lost. Steam, the compass, gunpowder, the principle of the electric telegraph, and a hundred other discoveries made of old, might be mentioned, which, in consequence of mankind not being ready for them, wholly dropt out of mind again, or languished on as mere toys or curiosities. And had those old cities been unbared at some earlier period, would they not most lamentably have shared the fate of the monuments which remained above ground,—would they not have been wantonly destroyed by a barbarous population, or been used as quarries, from whence the degenerate successors of the elder race might indolently draw their building materials? But Earth took them into her own safe keeping, and covered them up until the world had grown older and wiser, and knew how to prize such monuments of memorable but long-forgotten times.

Of all the great empires which have enduringly impressed themselves upon the world's memory, no one has perished leaving so few visible marks of its existence as that which first rose into greatness in the land of Assyria. It was this memorable region which gave birth to the first of the old "universal empires." On the plains of Shinar, on the banks of the Lower Euphrates, a community of civilised men was assembled more than four thousand years ago. There, in course of time, arose Babylon, with its impregnable walls, behind which the city might eat and drink and be merry, though the

mightiest of ancient hosts were encamped outside. There were the fabled Hanging Gardens, the wonder of the world, erected by one of its monarchs to please his young Median bride, whose heart yearned for the hills and groves of her native land. Towering above all rose the vast temple of Belus, unequalled for magnificence in the ancient world,—crowned with its gigantic golden statue of the Sun-god, rising so high, and flashing so brightly in the upper air, that to the crowds below it seemed invested with the splendours of the deity whom it symbolised. But more than two thousand years have elapsed since all this grandeur came to a sudden end; and so thoroughly has the city mouldered into the dust, and so completely has it been buried in its own ruins, that during the recent excavations executed on its site, scarcely a detached figure in stone, or a solitary tablet, says Mr Layard, was dug out of the vast heaps of rubbish.

To the north, near the head of the great Mesopotamian valley, on the banks of the Tigris, stood the sister or rival city of Nineveh: Babylon and Nineveh forming, as it were, the foci of the Assyrian realm, which spread out like an ellipse around them. Nineveh, "that great city," against which Jonah of old uttered his prophetic warnings—from whose gates Sennacherib, Sargon, and Holofernes successively set forth, with their spearmen and horses and chariots, against Damascus and Israel, and the coasts of Tyre and Sidon—and around whose walls the combined armies of Persia and Babylonia encamped for three years in vain,—fell at last by a doom as sudden and overwhelming as that which overtook Babylon—perishing so utterly, that when Xenophon and the Ten Thousand passed that way, even its name was forgotten, and the Greek warrior and historian notices its mounds of ruins simply as having been those of "an ancient city," which he calls Larissa.

As Xenophon left those ruins Layard found them. Riding, in company with a friend as daring and enthusiastic as himself, down the right bank of the Tigris, in April 1840, he rested for

the night at a small Arab village, around which still exist the vestiges of an ancient town ; and here he got his first look of the buried city whose discovery was to immortalise his name. "From the summit of an artificial eminence," he says, "I looked down upon a broad plain, separated from us by the river. A line of lofty mounds bounded it on the east, and one of a pyramidal form rose high above the rest. Beyond it could be faintly traced the waters of the Zab. Its position rendered its identification easy. This was the pyramid which Xenophon had described, and near which the Ten Thousand had encamped ; the ruins around it were those which the Greek general saw twenty-two centuries before, and which were even then the remains of an *ancient* city."

It must not be supposed, because Nineveh and Babylon are the only cities made much mention of in Assyrian history, that none others of importance existed in the country around. On the contrary, again and again, in the course of his journeys, does Mr Layard speak of mounds of ruins, marking the site of what must once have been "large cities." In truth, the valley-land of Mesopotamia, with its rich alluvial plains, intersected by the Tigris and Euphrates and their numerous tributaries, presented a vast surface, which at any moment the industry of man might convert into a garden. In remotest times, if in imagination we may recur to the period when first mankind began to settle on its plains, it must have presented a spectacle very much like that which now meets the eye—wide plains of fertile soil springing into verdure wherever it is touched by water, but desert almost everywhere for a great portion of the year. The latent fertility of the region was forthwith developed by the race who there took up their abode. The waters of the rivers were led over the flat plains in long canals, diffusing in all directions their irrigating streams, and causing the teeming soil, under the rays of a glowing and never-failing sun, to produce food in abundance both for man and beast. "A system of navigable canals, that may excite the admiration of even the

modern engineer, connected together the Euphrates and Tigris. With a skill showing no common knowledge of the art of surveying, and of the principles of hydraulics, the Babylonians took advantage of the different levels in the plains, and of the periodical rises in the rivers, to complete the water-communication between all parts of the province, and to fertilise, by artificial irrigation, an otherwise barren and unproductive soil."* Alexander the Great, after he had transferred his seat of empire to the East, so fully appreciated the importance of those great works that he ordered them to be cleansed and repaired, and superintended the work in person, steering his boat with his own hand through the channels. Similar operations undertaken now would again restore to Mesopotamia its old fertility, and fit Babylon, not only for regaining her place as the emporium of the Eastern world, but for becoming the great entrepot of commerce between the West and East,—which, we believe, will ere long, in consequence of the introduction of railways, again flow into its old overland routes by Aleppo and Palmyra, through the deserts, from the Levant to the head of the Persian Gulf.

This system of irrigation, it is true, was not carried to perfection until a late period in the history of the Assyrian empire; but it must at the same time be recollected, that as far back as the light of history penetrates, it is always civilised man that is discerned in the valley of the Euphrates. The vague whisperings of tradition, even, cannot speak of a time when savage tribes wandered over its plains. If we investigate who were the settled inhabitants of the land when first the light of history breaks upon it—the people among whom the old Assyrian empire arose—we shall come to the conclusion that the great mass of the population belonged to that purely Syrian race whose settlements have in all ages extended from the banks of the Euphrates to the shores of the Levant. But mixed with this race, very much in the neighbourhood of Babylon, and

* LAYARD.

more faintly as we proceed northwards, were offshoots of the Cushite race,—a people having its principal seats in southern Arabia, along the coasts of the Indian and Red Seas, imperfectly represented by the Himyarite Arabs of the present day, and forming a connecting-link between the old races of Syria and Egypt. Into the population thus constituted descended the Chaldeans,—a tribe from the highlands which border the Mesopotamian valley on the north-east, and who, though Syrians in the main, evidently approximated in character and physical appearance to the Persian race. This tribe obtained an ascendancy over the population at Nineveh and in the upper portion of the Mesopotamian valley,—imparting to that population, apparently, a more robust character than prevailed in the lower part of the valley and around Babylon. Frequent wars occurred between these half-rival half-sister cities; the general result of which was, that the people of Nineveh held the Babylonians in a more or less perfect state of dependence. In the course of time, too, the Cushite element in the Babylonian population (and which probably gave to it its turn for commerce and maritime enterprise) became extinct; while the Chaldean element, which differed but little from the general mass of the population, seems to have greatly increased. It was from Ur of the Chaldees, in the vicinity of Nineveh, that Abraham, in obedience to the Divine voice, went forth, journeying south-westwards, through the desert lying between the Euphrates and Syria, and, reaching Palestine, became the father of the Hebrew nation. From his loins also proceeded the Idumeans, who proved their superiority to the rest of the Arabian tribes by founding the kingdom of Edom, and excavating the wondrous rock-city of Petra.

Such, then, appears to have been the old population of Assyria. In Genesis we are informed that Ashur went forth out of the land of Shinar, and founded new habitations in the north,—"Nineveh and the city Reheboth, and Calah, and Resen, which is a great city;" but according to the Chaldean historians, the

builders of the cities of Assyria came down from the mountains of Armenia. These statements, so far from being inconsistent, tend to corroborate the conjecture which, from other considerations, we had arrived at—namely, that the Chaldeans were not the first comers into the plains around Nineveh, but found there a lowland population in an advanced state of society, and allied in blood and language to themselves. Moses of Chorene expressly records that such was the case; but the real strength of the supposition we rest upon general grounds, which it is needless here to enter upon. This Chaldean tribe, then, which ultimately became the predominant one in the valley of the Upper Tigris, were not the actual founders of the Assyrian cities; but under their ascendancy those cities were strengthened, extended, and embellished so much as to become as it were the creations of their hands.

The architecture of a nation is ever dependent to a great extent upon the building materials at its command. The alluvial plains of Assyria, unbroken by a single eminence, were singularly destitute of stone of any kind, especially in the lower portion of the valley; so that the inhabitants had to betake themselves to bricks, which they could manufacture in endless abundance by mixing a little straw with the alluvial soil. In Babylonia, where not a slab of stone could be got within hundreds of miles, these bricks were carefully made,—being kiln-dried, and often coloured, and, while the colours were still moist, glazed in the fire. Around Nineveh they were, for the most part, merely dried for a day or two in the hot sun,—and with bricks of this description the houses of Mesopotamia are built to this day. But Nineveh, being nearer the mountains, had a great advantage over Babylon. The plains around it, and the lowlands lying between the Tigris and the hill-country, abound in a kind of coarse alabaster or gypsum, large masses of which protrude in low ridges from the alluvial soil, or are exposed in the gullies formed by winter torrents. Ornamental from its colour and transparency, and offering few difficulties to the sculptor, this alabaster was used

by the people of Nineveh in their public buildings. Cut into large slabs, it was used as panels to cover the inner surface of the brick walls,—each slab bearing on its back an inscription recording the name, title, and descent of the king who undertook the work, and being kept in its place by cramps and plugs of metal or wood. After being thus fixed against the wall, the face of the slabs was covered with sculptures and inscriptions, —in some edifices, as at Kouyunjik, each chamber being reserved for some particular historical incident, and each palace, it would appear, only recording in its sculptures the exploits of the king who built it.

No pillars are to be found in Assyrian architecture; and the difficulty experienced by the builders in the construction of expansive roofs is shown by the great narrowness of the rooms compared with their length; the most elaborately ornamented hall at Nimroud, although above 160 feet in length, being only 35 feet broad. Forty-five feet appears to have been the greatest width spanned over by a roof; for the great central hall in the north-west palace at Nimroud (110 feet by 90) may have been entirely open to the sky,— and, as it did not contain sculptures, it probably was so. The rooms ranged from 16 to 20 feet in height; the side-walls being covered to twice the height of a man by the sculptured slabs, and their upper portion being built of baked bricks richly coloured, or of sun-dried bricks covered by a thin coat of plaster, on which various ornaments were painted. Of the mode of roofing these palaces we know nothing. Probably the roof was formed of beams resting solely on the side-walls; but as this method would not have sufficed for the larger rooms, from 35 to 45 feet in width, we may conjecture that the beams in some instances were made to meet and rest against each other at a slight angle in the centre of the ceiling, or (more improbably) that wooden pillars or posts were employed, which have since entirely mouldered away. No traces of windows are to be found, even in the chambers next

the outer walls; so that, as in the temples of Egypt, there must have been square openings or skylights in the ceilings, which may have been closed during the winter-rains by canvass or some such material. The pavement of the chambers was formed either of alabaster slabs, or of kiln-burnt bricks, covered with inscriptions relating to the king;—and beneath this pavement, drains led from almost every room, showing that water might occasionally have entered the rooms from above, by such apertures in the ceiling as have been conjectured.

The interior of these Assyrian palaces must have been as magnificent as imposing. Mr Layard very graphically describes the spectacle which, in days of old, met the eye upon entering the abode of the Assyrian kings:—"The visitor was ushered in through the portal guarded by the colossal lions or bulls of white alabaster. In the first hall he found himself surrounded by the sculptured records of the empire. Battles, sieges, triumphs, the exploits of the chase, the ceremonies of religion, were portrayed on the walls—sculptured in alabaster, and painted in gorgeous colours. Under each picture were engraved, in characters filled up with bright copper, inscriptions describing the scenes represented. Above the sculptures were painted other events—the king, attended by his eunuchs and warriors, receiving his prisoners, entering into alliances with other monarchs, or performing some sacred duty. These representations were enclosed in coloured borders of elaborate and elegant design. The emblematic tree, winged bulls, and monstrous animals were conspicuous amongst the ornaments. At the upper end of the hall was the colossal figure of the king in adoration before the supreme deity, or receiving from his eunuch the holy cup. He was attended by warriors bearing his arms, and by the priests or presiding divinities. His robes, and those of his followers, were adorned with groups of figures, animals, and flowers, all painted with brilliant colours.

"The stranger trod upon alabaster slabs, each bearing an inscription, recording the titles, genealogy, and achievements of the great king. Several doorways, formed by gigantic winged lions or bulls, or by the figures of guardian deities, led into other apartments which again opened into more distant halls. In each were new sculptures. On the walls of some were processions of colossal figures—armed men and eunuchs following the king, warriors laden with spoil, leading prisoners, or bearing presents and offerings to the gods. On the walls of others were portrayed the winged priests, or presiding divinities, standing before the sacred trees. The ceilings were divided into square compartments, painted with flowers, or with the figures of animals. Some were inlaid with ivory, each compartment being surrounded by elegant borders and mouldings. The beams, as well as the sides of the chambers, may have been gilded, or even plated with gold and silver; and the rarest woods, in which the cedar was conspicuous, were used for the wood-work. Square openings in the ceilings of the chambers admitted the light of day. A pleasing shadow was thrown over the sculptured walls, and gave a majestic expression to the human features of the colossal forms which guarded the entrances. Through these apertures was seen the bright blue of an Eastern sky, enclosed in a frame on which were painted, in vivid colours, the winged circle, in the midst of elegant ornaments, and the graceful forms of ideal animals.

"These edifices, as it has been shown, were great national monuments, upon the walls of which were represented in sculpture, or inscribed in alphabetic characters, the chronicles of the empire. He who entered them might thus read the history, and learn the glory and triumphs of the nations. They served, at the same time, to bring continually to the remembrance of those who assembled within them on festive occasions, or for the celebration of religious ceremonies, the deeds of their ancestors, and the power and majesty of their gods."

This royal magnificence was well guarded. The external walls of the Assyrian cities, as we learn from the united testimony of ancient authors, were of extraordinary size and height. According to Diodorus Siculus, the walls of Nineveh were one hundred feet high,—so broad that three chariots might be driven abreast along their summit,—and fortified with fifteen hundred towers, each of which was two hundred feet in height. According to the same authority, the circumference of the city was sixty miles,—a statement which exactly tallies with the dimensions given in the book of Jonah, where Nineveh is said to have been three days' journey round about. This is an immense circuit,—but it must be recollected that the dimensions of an Eastern city do not bear the same proportion to its population as those of a European city. The custom, prevalent to some degree in Southern Asia even in the earliest times, of secluding the women in apartments removed from those of the men, as well as the heat of the climate, renders a separate house for each family almost indispensable, and is perfectly incompatible with that economy of space, and close aggregation of dwellings, which we witness in the cities of the West. Moreover, within the circuit of those old cities there used to be a "paradise" or hunting-ground for the king, besides orchards, gardens, and an extensive tract of arable land; so that the inhabitants, behind their impregnable walls, could bid defiance alike to force and to famine. From the expression of Jonah, that there was much cattle within the walls of Nineveh, it may be inferred that there was also pasture for them. Many cities of the East—as, for instance, Damascus and Ispahan—are still built in this manner; the amount of their population being greatly disproportionate, according to our Western notions, to the space which they occupy.

If we take the four great mounds of Nimroud, Kouyunjik, Khorsabad, and Karamles, as the corners of an elongated quadrangle (eighteen miles by twelve), it will be found that

the form as well as the circumference of the city correspond pretty accurately with the statements of ancient writers. Each quarter of this vast city, says Mr Layard, may have had its peculiar name; hence the palace of Evorita, where Saracus destroyed himself,—and the Mespila and Larissa of Xenophon, which names the Greek general applies respectively to the mound-ruins at Kouyunjik and Nimroud. It is certain that large fortified enclosures existed within the outer walls, surrounding the principal buildings or palaces, and capable of defence after the rest of the city was stormed. These four great mounds, the scene of Mr Layard's excavations, mark the site of the principal public buildings of Nineveh,—apparently at once temples and palaces,—built upon elevated platforms of masonry, like the temples of the ancient Mexicans, and, from their great strength, always placed so as to form part of the external defences of the city. But these were not the only great buildings in Nineveh; for within the quadrangle described by these ruins, many other large mounds are to be seen, and the face of the country is strewed with the remains of pottery, bricks, and other fragments. The space between the great public buildings was doubtless occupied by private houses, standing in the midst of gardens, and built at distances from each other; or forming streets which enclosed gardens of considerable extent, and even arable land. The absence of the remains of these houses, says Mr Layard, is easily accounted for. "They were constructed almost entirely of sun-dried bricks, and, like the houses now built in the country, soon disappeared altogether when once abandoned and allowed to fall into decay. The largest palaces would probably have remained undiscovered, had not slabs of alabaster marked the walls. There is, however, sufficient to indicate that buildings were once spread over the space above described; for, besides the vast number of small mounds everywhere visible, scarcely a husbandman drives his plough over the soil without exposing the vestiges of former habitations."

From the numerous large mound-ruins visible on the Mesopotamian plains, it is evident that the work of excavation is only commenced. The long-sealed book of Assyrian history and antiquities has only begun to be unrolled; and in the course of another generation the labours of Layard will probably be as far exceeded as those of Belzoni in Egypt have been by the recent investigations of Lepsius and Champollion-le-Jeune. It is needless, then, at present to waste time in the discussion of moot points in Assyrian history, which in a few years fresh discoveries may at once set definitively at rest. As yet, Assyrian chronology has been but little advanced by the recent researches,—and this principally owing to the circumstance, already mentioned, that the sculptures and inscriptions of each palace relate only to the career of the particular king who erected or embellished it. All we know is, that the palaces at Nimroud (if we except the unfinished one) must have been built at least nine centuries before Christ, but that the earliest of them may have been reared by the great Ninus himself (2000 B.C.),—a most unsatisfactory state of knowledge; and that the palaces at the other angles of the city—namely, Kouyunjik, Karamles, and Khorsabad—were erected, to all appearance, between the ninth and sixth centuries before Christ. The conjecture that assigns the building of the most ancient palace to the founder of the Assyrian empire has this much at least in its favour: that whereas Ctesias and other writers speak of the Bactrian and Indian expedition of Ninus and Semiramis, so upon the obelisk discovered at Nimroud—which belongs to the period of the earliest palace, having been erected by the son of the founder of that building—are represented the Bactrian camel, the elephant, and the rhinoceros (all animals from India and Central Asia), brought as tribute by a conquered people to the Assyrian king. This much, at least, we know with all certainty in regard to the royal edifices of Nineveh, that a great crisis and convulsion in the fortunes of the State occurred between the erection of the earlier and later series of

palaces. This convulsion was probably occasioned by the successful revolt of the Medes under Arbaces, and the capture of Nineveh, about 950 B.C., which brought to an end the ancient dynasty of Ninus and Semiramis, after thirteen centuries of power, and established a new family on the throne.

Ninus—whose character as a great hunter of the lion and panther tallies with the scriptural accounts of Nimrod— is said, by the general consent of many ancient writers, to have founded the Assyrian monarchy more than two thousand years before Christ,—doing so in the midst of a people far advanced in civilisation, whose works, says Moses of Chorene, the newcomers endeavoured to destroy, and whose knowledge of the arts was taken advantage of by the conquerors in the erection and embellishment of their palaces. In corroboration of this it may be stated, that of all the specimens of Assyrian art which have been discovered, the most ancient are invariably the best,—a curious fact, agreeing with, though not establishing, the hypothesis that the builders of the most ancient edifices at Nineveh were assisted by a people of skill superior to their own.

The boundaries of the Assyrian monarchy, like that of every other long-established empire, fluctuated from age to age. At the epoch of its greatest power, it appears to have maintained an ascendancy over Persia and Media, and from thence westwards to the shores of the Levant; while it is indisputable that its rule was for long dominant in Asia Minor, where towns were built and colonies founded by the Assyrian monarchs,—Troy itself, according to Plato, having been one of their dependencies. The prowess of the Assyrian armies in later times made itself felt even in Egypt; but in the wars between these two great antagonists, there is reason to believe that the balance of success lay at first with the Egyptians. It would appear that for a considerable period, between the fourteenth and ninth centuries B.C., a close connection, either by conquest or friendly intercourse, existed between these two empires,—

which connection produced considerable changes in the arts and customs of Assyria, as may be witnessed in the introduction of the sitting sphinxes of Nimroud, and the lotus-shaped ornaments of Khorsabad and Kouyunjik.

On the earliest monuments of Nineveh we read of expeditions undertaken against Babylon, which city was at first unquestionably independent of the Assyrian princes, but which ere long became subject to them, — wearing their chains, however, unwillingly, and occasionally in name rather than in fact. When the Medes revolted under Arbaces, the governor of Babylon took part with the rebels, and in alliance with them succeeded in capturing Nineveh, and destroying its public buildings—if not depopulating it. Under the new or later dynasty, however—which counts in its brief roll the great names of Sargon and Sennacherib — Nineveh rose in renewed splendour and power: the palaces of Kouyunjik, Karamles, and Khorsabad were built, the last of which excelled all its predecessors in magnificence; and the city attained those vast dimensions described by Diodorus and the prophet Jonah. But the days of this great city and ancient empire were fast drawing to a close. Headed by Cyaxares and Nabopolassar, the combined armies of the Persians and Babylonians again approached its walls; and after a protracted siege of nearly three years, they at length (606 B.C.) captured the city at a time when the river had overflowed its bed and carried away a portion of the wall. The city was then utterly destroyed—the torch was put to its noble palaces, and its inhabitants were compulsorily distributed among the adjoining towns and villages. Nineveh was no more. Twelve centuries afterwards (A.D. 627), the great battle between Heraclius and Rhazates was fought within the space once compassed by its walls. "The city, and even the ruins of the city," says Gibbon, "had long ago disappeared: the vacant space afforded a spacious field for the operations of the two armies."

The primitive religion of the Assyrians appears to have been

a form of Sabæanism. It appears to have consisted in the worship of the sun—not as the Deity, but as an emblem of the Deity—as the greatest, most glorious, and most beneficent of His works in the eye of man, and the mystery of whose unbeholdable splendours not unaptly symbolised the presence of Him "who dwelleth in light that is inaccessible and full of glory." But the peculiar part of the Chaldean faith or philosophy was the influence which it ascribed to the planets over the life and fortunes of men. The belief in astrology is one of the oldest, if not absolutely the very oldest, which one meets with in the history of postdiluvian mankind. It was not confined to any one nation, or any one era of the world. It has lived from the earliest times, down through several thousand years, to the middle ages of Europe, and still lingers even at the present day. To take the last places in the world where one is likely to find old-world notions lingering—"Raphaels" and "Zadkiels" are to be found even in the capitals of England and France, where astrological almanacs are yearly published, and evidently must find many purchasers. But the East is the native land of astrology; and there, to this day, it is believed in as firmly as if it belonged to the domain of the positive sciences. It is curious to know that one of the causes of the disastrous issue of the last battle (August 5, 1854) between the Turks and Russians in Asia, was the obstinate adhesion of the Turkish general to an astrological crotchet. The Russians had detached a division of their army to Bayazid, where they surprised and defeated a Turkish corps; but no sooner did General Guyon learn of this movement, than he counselled the Turkish commander, Zarif Pasha, immediately to advance and attack the main body of the Russians while thus weakened. The Pasha, however, while assenting to the plan, would not move at the time required, alleging that neither that day nor the morrow would do for the attack, "because the stars were unpropitious." Eight-and-forty hours were thus lost, big with the fortunes of the campaign; and the consequence was, that

when the Turks did at last advance, they found not only that the Russian detachment had rejoined the main body, but that the Russian general had been fully apprised by his spies of the meditated night-march of his enemies.

We have not space here to undertake an investigation of the old Chaldean faith, nor to point out the principles in human nature by a speculative reasoning upon which astrology seems to have arisen. We would remark, however, that the convulsion which intervened between the fall of the first Assyrian dynasty and the rise of the second, occasioned, or was at least accompanied by, a change in the State-religion of the country. In the palaces at Khorsabad and Kouyunjik, built by the second dynasty, we find no traces of the religious emblems so frequent in the sculptures of the earliest palaces at Nimroud. The emblem of the great Divinity—the winged figure within the circle—has never been found in the later-built palaces; and from the frequent representations of the fire-altar in the bas-reliefs from those ruins, and on cylinders evidently of the same period, there is reason to believe that a fire-worship, like that introduced by Zoroaster among the Persians, had succeeded to the earlier form of Sabæanism. Although eagle-headed figures, and other mythic forms, exist in the earliest sculptures at Nineveh, in no case do they appear to have been objects of worship. The king is only seen in adoration before one symbol of the Deity—the figure of which we have already spoken, with the wings and tail of a bird enclosed in a circle, resembling the Ormuzd of the Persian monuments. He is generally standing or kneeling beneath this circled figure, with his hand raised in sign of prayer or adoration. This symbol of the Deity is never represented above any person of inferior rank, but appears to watch specially over the king,—who among the Assyrians, as among all the old nations, was regarded as the type and representative of the nation. It is seen above him on all occasions, in the sculptures, sympathising with and assisting him, like a good Providence. If it presides over a triumph, its action

resembles that of the king; and when represented over the king in war, it is seen, like a god of battles, shooting its arrows against the enemies of the Assyrians. The most superficial examination of the sculptures suffices to prove the sacred character of the king. Not only is the symbol of the great Deity above him, as well as the sun, moon, and planets; but the priests, or lesser divinities (whichever the winged human figures so frequently found on the Assyrian monuments may be), are represented as waiting upon or ministering to him. This is just a development of the old patriarchal principle, by which a father used to worship on behalf of his family. At this day the principle is carried out to the fullest extent in China, where the "higher sacrifices" can only be offered by the Emperor in person, who actually regards himself as the father of the nation, and who, on occasion of national calamities, fasts and makes public confession of his sins and shortcomings, looking upon them as the reason why the Divine wrath is poured out upon his people. We may add that in Assyria the priesthood appears to have been—not a caste, as in India—but rather, as in Egypt, a body of men drafted from the élite of the nation,—employing themselves, besides their temple-services, in accumulating and perpetuating, but secreting, knowledge, and into whose ranks there was no admission save through a noviciate of a somewhat stern character, of which the inaugural ceremonials of our Masonic bodies are probably the last lifeless —may we not say ludicrous?—relics.

A marked difference is likewise observable in the style of ornamental art under the earlier and later dynasties. What principally distinguishes Assyrian from Egyptian sculpture is, that the former is entirely free from the angular mode of treatment so conspicuous in the latter. It is more florid, and altogether more advanced; but at the same time it must be said that, in regard to accuracy, we incline to place greater estimation upon the portrait-sculpture of Egypt than upon that of Assyria. In the later monuments of Nineveh we find direct,

although not very extensive, traces of Egyptian influence; but the principal distinction between the earlier and later sculptures is, the greater knowledge of design and composition displayed in the former. The bas-relief representing the Lion-hunt, now in the British Museum, is a good illustration of the earliest school of Assyrian art yet discovered. It far exceeds the later sculptures in the vigour of treatment, the elegance of the forms, and in what the French aptly term *mouvement*,—as well as by the evident attempt at composition, or artistical arrangement of the groups. The sculptors who worked at Khorsabad and Kouyunjik perhaps possessed more skill in handling their tools, and their work is frequently superior to that of the earlier artists in delicacy of execution—as, for instance, in the details of the features—and in boldness of relief; but they are decidedly inferior to their ancestors in the higher branches of art—in the treatment of a subject, and in beauty and variety of form.

The domestic furniture, arms, utensils, and personal ornaments of the Assyrians show a very refined and cultivated taste. In their arms they rivalled even the Greeks in elegance of design. Their drinking-cups and vessels used on festive occasions were apparently of gold, like those of Solomon, or of silver; and they were frequently wrought into the shape of the head and neck of an animal—such as a lion or bull—and resembled those afterwards in use among the Greeks, and found in the tombs of Etruria. Their thrones, tables, and couches were made both of metal and wood; and the tables and chairs were frequently shaped like our camp-stools, and may have been made to close. On the earliest monuments, the chair is represented richly cushioned, with the seat and legs tastefully carved, but without a back,—in the later monuments the back is added, but the chairs exhibit less elegance. Indeed, in domestic and personal ornament, as in the higher branches of art, the most ancient Assyrian monuments greatly exceed the latter. "Many forms had been preserved," says Mr Layard, "as in the swords,

bracelets, and armlets; but they had evidently degenerated, and are more coarsely designed in the sculptures. This is also evident in the embroideries of the robes, and in the details of the chariots. We see the same love of elaborate and profuse decoration, but not that elegance and variety so conspicuous in the ornaments of the first period. The kneeling bull or wild-goat, the graceful flower, and the groups of men and animals skilfully combined, are succeeded by a profusion of rosettes, circles, and squares, covering the whole surface of the dress, or the sides of the chariots. Although there is a certain richness of appearance, yet the classic forms, if the term may be used, of the earlier artists, are wanting."

The materials at our command are as yet too scanty to enable us to arrive at definite conclusions as to the manners and private life of the Assyrians; but we do not doubt that future discoveries will yet supply the desideratum. "From casual notices in the Bible and in ancient history, we learn that the Assyrians, as well as those who succeeded them in the empire of Asia, were fond of public entertainments and festivities, and that they displayed on such occasions the greatest luxury and magnificence. The Assyrian king, called Nabuchodonosor in the book of Judith, on returning from his victorious expedition against Arphaxad, feasted with his whole army for one hundred and twenty days. The same is related by the Greek authors of Sardanapalus, after his great victory over the combined armies of the Medes. The book of Esther describes the splendour of the festivals given by the Babylonian king. The princes and nobles of his vast dominions were feasted for one hundred and eighty days; and for one week all the people of Susa assembled in the gardens of his palace, and were served in vessels of gold. The richest tapestries adorned the halls and tents, and the most costly couches were prepared for the guests. Wine was served in abundance, and women, including even the wives and concubines of the monarch, were frequently present to add to the magnificence

of the scene. According to Quintus Curtius, not only did hired female performers exhibit on these occasions, but the wives and daughters of the nobles, forgetting their modesty, danced before the guests, divesting themselves even of their garments. Wine was drunk immoderately. When Babylon was taken by the Persians, the inhabitants were celebrating one of their great festivals, and even the guards were intoxicated. The Babylonian king, ignorant of the approaching fate of his capital, and surrounded by one thousand of his princes and nobles, and by his wives and concubines, drank out of the golden vessels that had been carried away from the Jewish temple. On the walls of the palace at Khorsabad was a bas-relief representing a public feast, probably in celebration of a victory. Men were seen seated on high chairs with drinking-cups in their hands; whilst attendants were bringing in bowls, goblets, and various fruits and viands, for the banquet. At Nimroud part of a similar bas-relief was discovered. Music was not wanting on these occasions."*

The arts and civilisation of Nineveh represent those of Babylon also. Babylon, though it was long of attaining to the political greatness of her rival, was evidently an older city. It can hardly be doubted that it arose from the first gathering of mankind upon the plains of Shinar. From notices of it on Egyptian monuments of the time of Thothmes III., it is evident that it was a place of considerable note at least in the fifteenth century before Christ. Although for long politically overshadowed by her neighbour Nineveh, Babylon at an early period became famous for the extent and importance of her commerce. No position could then have been more favourable than hers for carrying on a trade with all the regions of the known world. She stood upon a navigable stream that brought to her quays the produce of the temperate highlands of Armenia,—running westward in one part of its course to within a hundred miles of the Mediterranean, and

* LAYARD.

emptying its waters into a gulf of the Indian Ocean. Parallel to this great river, and scarcely inferior to it in size, was the Tigris, flowing through the fertile plains of Assyria, and carrying their produce to the Babylonian cities. The inhabitants turned these natural advantages to the best account; and their industry and enterprise, co-operating with that of civilised people in the adjoining countries, greatly increased the means of locomotion. Highroads and causeways across the Desert connected Babylonia with Syria and Palestine. Fortified stations protected the merchants from the wandering tribes of Arabia,—walled cities served as resting-places and store-houses,—and wells at regular intervals gave an abundant supply of water during the hottest season of the year. One of those highways was carried through the centre of Mesopotamia, and, crossing the Euphrates near the town of Anthemusia, led into Central Asia;—a second appears to have left Babylon by the western quarter of the city, and entered Idumea, after passing through the country of the Nabathæans;—while others branched off to Tadmor, and to other cities built in the Desert almost solely for purposes of trade. To the east of Babylon was the celebrated military and commercial road described by Herodotus, leading from Sardis to Susa in ninety days' journey, and furnished at intervals of about fifteen miles with stations and public hostelries, probably resembling the modern caravanserais of Persia. A very considerable trade was likewise carried on with India, through Media, Hyrcania, and the centre of Asia,—by which route it was, probably, that the greater part of the precious stones and gold were supplied to Babylon. A coasting-trade existed along the shores of the Persian Gulf eastwards. The prophet Isaiah alludes to the ships of the Chaldeans; and we learn from the Kouyunjik inscriptions that the inhabitants of the country at the mouth of the Euphrates possessed vessels in which, when defeated by the Assyrians, they took refuge on the sea. It is difficult to determine to how far the Babylonians may have navigated the

Indian Ocean; but of the merchandise in which they traded, the pearls, cottons, spices, precious stones, ivory, ebony, silks, and dyes, a large portion, if not the whole, must have been obtained from the southern coasts of Arabia, and from the Indian peninsula. Their exports consisted both of manufactures and of the natural produce of the country. Corn was cultivated to a great extent, and sent to distant provinces; and the Babylonian carpets, silks, and woollen fabrics, woven or embroidered with figures of mythic animals, and with exquisite designs, were not less famous for the beauty of their texture and workmanship, than for the richness and variety of their colours.

Babylon reached her zenith of power and magnificence immediately after the final destruction of Nineveh. Under Nebuchadnezzar she succeeded to the proud position so long held by her rival. The bounds of the city were extended; buildings of extraordinary size and magnificence were erected; and her victorious armies conquered Syria and Palestine, and penetrated into Egypt. But her greatness as an independent State was short-lived. The Medians and Persians, who had been the principal agents in the overthrow of the Assyrian empire, now united under one king, turned their warlike strength against their former ally Babylon; and scarcely half a century had elapsed from the fall of Nineveh, when "Belshazzar, the king of the Chaldeans, was slain, and Darius the Median took the kingdom."

From that time Babylonia sank into a province of Persia—still retaining, however, much of its former power and trade; and, as we learn from the rock-inscriptions of Bisutun, as well as from ancient authors, struggling more than once to regain its independence. When Alexander the Great overthrew the Persian empire, Babylon opened its gates to him, and he deemed the city worthy to become the capital of his mighty empire. The early death of the conqueror, however, without leaving a successor, prevented his splendid projects being

carried into execution ; and the last blow to the prosperity of Babylon was given by Seleucus, when he laid the foundations of his new capital Seleucia on the banks of the Tigris (B.C. 322). Nevertheless, a considerable population seems to have lingered in the fast-decaying city; for, five centuries afterwards, we find the Parthian king Evemerus sending numerous families from Babylon into Media, to be sold as slaves, and burning many great and beautiful edifices which still remained standing. At the time of the Arab invasion, in the beginning of the seventh century, the ancient cities of Babylon were "a desolation, a dry land, and a wilderness." Amidst the heaps that marked the site of Babylon herself, there rose the small town of Hillah, which, with its falling gateway, mean bazaar, and a few half-ruined mosques, still exists, as if in mockery of the power and splendour which, in long-departed ages, had there its abode.

Moral corruption was the ruin of Babylon, as of all the great empires of the old world. Her vast trade, which rendered Babylon the gathering-place of men from all parts of the known world, which poured wealth into her coffers, and furnished her with luxuries of all kinds, had the effect of producing an effeminacy and general profligacy, which mainly contributed to her fall. There is no necessary connection between prosperity and corruption ; nevertheless, in nations as in individuals, it is generally found that a long lease of prosperity—especially if conjoined with much wealth, which at once allows of indolence and invites to self-indulgence—dwarfs the generous and lofty feelings of our nature, and renders both men and nations selfish in feeling, and absorbed in the material comforts and pleasures of life. In Babylon this tendency was aggravated, at least in later times, by the corruptions of its religion, promoted by a hierarchy which, in course of time, became at once too rich and too powerful for its own purity, and too profligate not to insure the corruption of the people. The description given by Herodotus of the manners of the people, when under the dominion

of the Persian kings, is sufficient to explain the cause of Babylon's speedy fall and ultimate ruin; and his account tallies perfectly with the denunciations of the city's wickedness by the prophets of Israel. Her inhabitants, as generally happens, along with their moral integrity lost their warlike character. When the Persians broke into the city, they were revelling in debauchery and lust; and when the Macedonian conqueror appeared at their gates, they received with indifference the yoke of a new master.

It was as a conquering and luxurious race that the Assyrians flashed forth over the old world of Asia. They had watered their steeds in the distant Indus; they had carried their arms to the Nile; they had planted colonies on the shores of the Ægean. They were the proud lords of Western Asia,—levelling cities, firing tower and temple, and carrying away peoples, as it pleased them. Hardy in the camp, they were luxurious at home. Heroism and effeminacy by turns claimed them. Commerce, as well as warlike booty, enriched the State, and brought all that a corrupt magnificence could desire within reach of the nobles. It is a vision of haughty voluptuous grandeur that gleams upon us, through the mists of time, from the palaces of Nineveh and Babylon. It is a sound of revelry that breaks upon us from that long-buried Past. We see the Hanging Gardens and the stately palaces,—and the lofty massive walls, behind whose impregnable circuit the inhabitants could "eat, drink, and be merry," though the mightiest of hosts were encamped without. And within there was feasting—banquets which endured for months,—with nobles and merchant-princes seated in gardens or in gorgeous halls, clothed in purple and fine linen,—with overflowing wine drunk immoderately out of golden cups,—and female forms dancing before them in light attire, even high-bred damsels, to whom revelry was dearer than modesty. While, in the country around, many a captive tribe beside the Hebrews pined on the banks of the Chebar, or hung their harps on the willows by the waters of Babylon,—sighing

in the crushed anguish of their hearts, "How long, O Lord! how long!" But the day of reckoning came at last. They who had triumphed by the sword, perished by the sword. A race prouder and more potent even than themselves were at hand; and the Mede and the Persian swept down from their hills to work the Divine will upon the luxurious corruptions of Chaldea. Tower and wall, palace and temple, went down before them. First the northern capital, then the southern perished: and the cry of the Hebrew prophet was realised—"Babylon is fallen, is fallen! and all the graven images of her gods HE hath broken unto the ground!"

"It is not difficult," says Mr Layard, "to account for the rapid decay of the country around Babylon. As the inhabitants deserted the city," and a foreign yoke pressed heavily upon them, "the canals were neglected; and when once those great sources of fertility were choked up, the plains became a wilderness. Upon the waters conveyed by their channels to the innermost parts of Mesopotamia, depended not only the harvests, the gardens, and the palm-groves, but the very existence of the numerous towns and villages far removed from the river-banks." Built of unbaked bricks, "they soon turned to mere heaps of earth and rubbish. Vegetation ceased; and the plains, parched by the burning heat of the sun, were ere long once more a vast arid waste."

So flourished and so fell Nineveh and Babylon. For fourteen centuries the Assyrian empire, of which they formed the pillars, was the leading Power in Western Asia,—overlapping to the south with that of Egypt, with which it was sometimes at peace, sometimes at war, at first a dependent and latterly victorious. We think the character of these two old empires may be symbolised by their different styles of architecture,—Egypt built with granite, and Assyria with alabaster and painted brick. It was not to geographical position that the difference was owing. The valley of the Nile and that of the Euphrates are much alike. Both are alluvial in their character, and

possess but little stone; and with both nations, accordingly, brick was the ordinary material employed in building. In both countries quarries of granite and other stone existed in the mountains which bordered the valley-land, with rivers upon which the stone might be floated down on rafts. But the one nation used this material, and the other did not. The Egyptians, indomitable in science, and animated by grander views than their Asiatic rivals, sent several hundred miles for intractable but everlasting granite, whereon to design their sculptures and inscriptions, and with which to rear those vast and countless edifices which seem destined to perpetuate the fame and history of their founders to the end of time. The Assyrians, fonder of luxury than of fame, more desirous of display than of enduring strength, contented themselves with materials which they could get without trouble, but ornamented the brick with colours, or coated it with slabs of soft alabaster, which they found protruding from the ground beneath their feet. The architecture of Egypt was grand and strong—that of Assyria was vast and showy. Egyptian sculpture was angular, and strove to be correct,—that of Assyria was round and florid. Although we know as yet but little of the arts and customs of life among the Assyrians, we may confidently conjecture that they were left comparatively unshackled by rule, and at the sway of individual impulse; whereas in Egypt rule and system pervaded everything, alike in art and in society.

Of all the empires of the first period of the world, the Assyrian is the one whose history and civilisation most closely connect themselves with the subsequent destinies of mankind. India and China were isolated empires, each developing a civilisation for itself, independent of and wholly uninfluencing the rest of the world. Egypt was less so; but it also, secluded in position and unproselytising in spirit, stands apart from the community of nations, and may be studied like an isolated statue placed in a niche. With Assyria, however, the case is far otherwise. Its influence, extending for centuries over

Western and Southern Asia—from the frontiers of Affghanistan to the Levant, from the Persian Gulf to the shores of the Ægean Sea—was potent in modifying a vast population, destined to give birth to many civilised States. From its loins proceeded the empire of Persia,—which was, in fact, in all respects only a modification of the empire which it supplanted; while these two, by their great influence over all Western Asia, including the Greek settlements of Ionia, must have affected in no slight degree the Hellenic mind—especially from the period when Alexander by his conquests drew Greece bodily into Asia. As yet the book of Assyrian history and civilisation is only beginning to be unrolled; but there are already in the possession of the literati of Europe written cylinders and inscriptions which, when deciphered, will cast important light upon matters as yet in the dark. Doubtless many more will be found even in the ruins already opened,—only one of which, let it be noted, has been thoroughly searched. Above all, ruins upon ruins are to be seen scattered over the plains of Mesopotamia, which Mr Layard describes as the evident remains of ancient cities, and which offer ample scope for the labours of more than one generation of investigators. We shall get at the truth at last. Years may roll by, and still see but little progress made in the search;—but there, underneath, lie the records of the Past for which we seek, and Earth will keep them safe until we are ready to dig for them in earnest.

INDIA: ITS CASTES AND CREEDS

INDIA is pre-eminently a Land of Idols and of strange gods. Polytheism and its never-failing attendant, idolatry, which in modern times have disappeared so much from the face of the earth, still exist in pristine vigour in the Indian peninsula. Bred in our northern homes, where one or two circles of rude stone pillars—the roofless temples of the Druids—are the sole relics of a paganism almost pre-historic in date and too bald for idols, the sons of England stand aghast as for the first time they open their eyes upon the Hindoo world which Providence has placed in our keeping. Graven images and heathen temples —we had heard of such things with the hearing of the ear, and read of them in Bible story at our mother's knee; but no sooner does youthful soldier or civilian land in India, than lo! his eye beholds them everywhere around, endless in number, unchallenged in prestige, as if he had been carried back three thousand years into the past. The denunciations of the Prophets and the irony of the Psalmist of Israel rise into his memory as he sees the idol-maker at work in his shop, or the image-god led about in its painted car, with gay or frenzied crowds bowing themselves before the work of their own hands—gods that "have mouths, but speak not; eyes, but see not; ears, but hear not; noses, but smell not; hands, but handle not; feet, but walk not; neither have any breath in their mouths." A many-coloured paganism, alike gay and terrible—mingled light and

darkness—is around him, fresh and vigorous; and, startled, he asks himself—Has Time stood still here? or are there indeed nations with whom existence has been stagnation for two thousand years, and which, like Earth's poles, remain for ever stationary while all else whirls onward in the march of Time?

Even the stern Monotheists of the Judæan hills, lofty worshippers of the viewless Jehovah, with all their intensity of hatred to idol-worship, must have wrung from poetry more fervid anathemas had their rapt gaze extended to the peninsula of Ind. The lowlands of Tyre and Philistia might bow to the fish-god Dagon,—the banks of Abana and Pharpar and the groves of the Orontes might be gay with the licentious rites of Ashtaroth,—memories of the gods of Egypt stood recorded in the Pentateuch,—and in the dark hours of the Captivity the Hebrew looked with heightened hatred upon the nobler symbol-worship of Assyria; but not Syria, Assyria, and Egypt combined would have equalled that stupendous development of paganism and idolatry which still exists as a spectacle for Man's humiliation and instruction, upon the plains of India. Nowhere else did a polytheistic worship rear itself on so grand a scale or in such vivid colours. Greece idolised men—Egypt animals—Africa has her fetishes of stocks and stones; but India has idolised all. Only one other civilised country in the world continues Pagan—namely, China; but India and the land of Confucius are the very opposites of each other in the forms and character of their religion. Roam through China, and although Buddhist pagodas dot the country, you will find that the idols—or rather the everlasting *one*, of Buddha—excite little or no veneration in the people; and Confucianism, the State and national creed, ignores idol-worship altogether. The people of the Flowery Land venerate, and present symbolic trifles to, the viewless manes of their ancestors; the Emperor, as the high-priest of the nation, offers upon an altar fruits of the earth to the sun and other skyey influences; and a vague

notion prevails of an impersonal god or divine law which they call "heaven." It is a paganism of matter-of-fact men ; and idol-worship, virtually ignored by the State, languishes amongst the people. But cross the Himalayas, and what a contrast appears! In India it is the positive, not the negative, side of paganism that presents itself. Imagination there supersedes Reason,—Personality replaces the more abstract feeling of Law, —Polytheism supersedes Deism,—GOD is fractured into a thousand minor deities, representative of his various attributes, —for every god there is an idol, and for every idol myriads of worshippers! Instead of the bald humility of the reverent Confucius, who confessed that he knew little about the Supreme, in India imagination has run riot, and has enveloped the gods with an atmosphere of stupendous fable, in which the sublime alternates with the grotesque, and the gigantic and superhuman is mingled with puerilities which could only have proceeded from the low imagination of rustic bards. This is not the whole truth,—a world of high speculation lies behind or soars above this crowded region of idols, monsters, and fables ; but such unquestionably are the features of Indian religion which are the most obvious and universal, and hence most expressive of the national character.

How striking a proof is it of the strength of the adoring principle in human nature—what an illustration of mankind's sense of dependence upon an unseen Supreme—that the grandest works which the nations have reared are those connected with Religion! Were a Spirit from some distant world to look down upon the surface of our planet as it spins round in the solar rays, his eye would be most attracted, as the morning light passed onward, by the glittering and painted pagodas of China, Borneo, and Japan—the richly-ornamented temples and stupendous rock-shrines of India—the dome-topped mosques and tall slender minarets of Western Asia—the pyramids and vast temples of Egypt, with their mile-long avenues of gigantic statues and sphinxes—the graceful shrines of classic Greece—

the basilicas of Rome and Byzantium — the semi-oriental church-domes of Moscow—the Gothic cathedrals of Western Europe—and as the day closed, the light would fall dimly upon the ruins of the grand sun-temples of Mexico aud Peru, where, in the infancy of reason and humanity, human sacrifices were offered up, as if the All-Father were pleased with the agony of his creatures! Nowhere has that adoring principle reared grander temples than in India. Egypt may surpass them in vastness, and Greece outdoes them in lovely symmetry; but as exhibiting a marvellous combination of grandeur, beauty, and variety, the religious edifices of India find no parallel in any single country. The stupendous rock-temples of Bombay—the magnificent and lofty-domed topes of Ceylon—the gorgeous sculpture-covered shrines of Southern India—the tall elliptical temples of Orissa—the lovely and exquisitely finished ones of Guzerat, combine with the Mohammedan mosques and minarets of Hindostan to form an unsurpassable assemblage of architectural art and skill.

Visit some of those TEMPLES, that we may better see their varying characters, as well as the idol-gods within them; and thereafter, when we come to the Festivals, we shall know better what to think of the adoring crowds without.

Hire a boat at Bombay in the early morning, ere the heat grows oppressive, and row seven miles across the harbour to the beautiful island of Elephanta. Ascend the path leading upwards through the narrow valley that separates the two long hills which constitute the island; and as you keep to the left along the bend of the hill, suddenly you find yourself in an open space, and before you the entrance to a rock-hewn temple, whose huge columns seem to support the whole mountain that rises above. Brushwood and wild shrubs crown the brow of the scarped face of the porphyry-like rock; beneath extends the façade of the temple 130 feet long, with its massive pillars and pilasters, leaving three wide openings or vistas, through which the eye seeks to penetrate the gloomy grandeur of the

interior. The temple fronts the north, so that the sun gives you little help; and though there are two side-fronts, identical in form with the main one (but approached by different paths), still the light within is considerably more dim than religious. Light a torch, and pass in and onwards beneath the flat far-spreading roof, and between the rows of pillars, whose cushion-like capitals seem pressed down by the weight of the mountain; until, passing gigantic figures sculptured in high relief on the side walls, you at length reach the back of the cave, and behold in a recess a colossal figure, three heads on one bust, representing the god Siva. In other sculptures on the walls, appears the four-faced Brahma riding on his swan—the elephant-headed Ganesa—and a company of nymphs or celestial choristers. But the presiding deity is Siva, the god alike of destruction and reproduction, and incidents of his life are sculptured around. In one group he appears in a hermaphrodite form, with one breast, and holding a trident; in another he appears as the destroyer, wearing a necklace of human skulls, with the cobra beside him, and brandishing a sword, while the victim of his wrath trembles before him. The Lingam, too, symbol of generation, appears in one of the side-apartments, and serves still further to assure us that this great cave-temple was the work of a people devoted to the Saiva worship. It is polytheistic Hindooism with Siva in the ascendant.

For another type of the rock-temple, let us go to Karli, and see one very different, both in form and object, from that above described. There are no idols here, no sculptured gods. Entering by a grand front, now defaced by the falling away of portions of the rock, we pass through arched doorways, beneath a gallery corresponding to an English rood-loft, and, in surprise, find ourselves as if in the interior of an early Christian church! For a hundred and thirty feet before us extends the nave or body of the temple, with rows of thick close-set pillars separating it from the narrow side-aisles,—overhead a high-

arching vaulted roof,—and at the inner end, beneath an apex or demidome, stands the relic-shrine or altar, upon which the whole light from the large window above the entrance is made to fall at an angle with most striking effect. No Siva, no Vishnoo, no Brahma! How opposite from modern Hindooism! Not even a Protestant church could be freer from imagery. It was the religion of Buddha—so practical in its morality, so abstract in its creed—that inspired the architects of that temple, and eighteen centuries have passed since first it was hewn imperishably in the rock. The Buddhists were the main formers of the rock-structures of India; and so numerous are these, that not less than forty distinct groups of them are to be found, comprehending about a thousand individual specimens. All these rock-structures are connected with one or other of the religions of India—Buddhist, Jain, or Brahminical—but four-fifths of them are not temples, but *viharas*, or monasteries for the once numerous priesthood of Buddha. Specimens of this latter kind we find in abundance at Salsette. A twenty miles' journey from Bombay brings one to the place, where, after passing through some miles of jungle, precipitous rocks are seen covering the hill-sides, and in these precipices excavations for the most part rising in stories above one another, connected by flights of steps cut in the face of the rock. Enter, and you find that these viharas consist of a central hall supported by from four to twenty or more pillars, with small cells all round it for the priests, and a sanctuary containing an image of Buddha. Here again, as at Karli and other places, occurs the curious apparition of a rock-hewn temple in the exact form of a Christian church, but with two colossal statues of Buddha on either side of the portico. Ajunta is another locality where these viharas abound. And it is pleasing to note that Art went with the Buddhist monk into his rock-halls, in some of which the fresco paintings on the walls remain fresh as the day they were limned, representing the manners and customs of India ten or fifteen hundred

years ago. In some of the older rock-halls, not only the walls and roof, but even the pillars, are wholly covered with stucco, and ornamented with painting. On the walls are extensive compositions of figures and landscapes; on pillars, single detached figures, representing either Buddha or Buddhist saints; while the paintings on the roof are almost invariably architectural frets and scrolls, often of extreme beauty and elegance, rivalling many of those at Pompeii and the Baths of Titus; a threefold division which Fergusson, the highest authority in such matters, pronounces to be "the only one admissible in good taste."* No eye regards those pleasant frescoes now. This frailest of the arts has here seen a whole religion pass away before it, like a scroll, from the land of its birth. Priests and worshippers have alike departed. Buddha himself is a forgotten name in India, although once he was adored from the Himalayas to Ceylon. These rock-temples have long survived the worship which inspired their constructors, and promise to outlast even Hindooism itself.

Turn southwards across the peninsula, and other kinds of temple-building, and other phases of religion, present themselves. The south of India is the stronghold of that extraordinary melange of polytheistic beliefs which is called Hindooism; and there its temples, festivals, and superstitions are to be seen on a grander scale than elsewhere. Here is the region or headquarters of the Tamul race, to which people, we incline to believe, Hindooism owes the greater part of its externals and extravagances. There are no cave-temples in this region — they are almost entirely structural edifices, with several remarkable monoliths, or temples carved out of single rocks. Not forty miles south of Madras stands Maliveram, the ruined "city of the great Bali," close by the sea, which is swallowing up the wondrous monuments with its encroaching waves. Half-submerged, a granite column rises above the waters;

* FERGUSSON'S *History of Architecture*—a model work, the fruit of extraordinary labour and most costly research.

close to the shore stand two monolithic temples, covered with exquisite carving, but with the sea already dashing against their sides. Five others are said to have been long ago submerged—a belief which has procured for the place, from British sailors, to whom it is a landmark, the name of "the Seven Pagodas." A wilderness of rock-temples and monoliths spreads around, sculptured on which appear some of the chief stories in Hindoo mythology. Vishnoo, Siva, Krishna, and the goddess Durga are the leading deities of the place, and figure as the heroes or heroine of the grotesque and monstrous myths sculptured on the walls. Here we have Vishnoo lying on the great snake Sesha with the thousand heads; here also we see him in his first avatar as the fish, in his second as the tortoise, his fourth as the boar, and his fifth as the dwarf. Here, too, is Krishna, like an Apollo kicked out of Olympus, playing his tricks on the shepherdesses of Muttra, whose hearts he stole, whose butter he ran off with, and whose jars of milk it was his divine pleasure to upset; and in one sculpture we see him in a tree with the milkmaids' clothes, which he had run off with when their owners were bathing, and for the restoration of which they beseech him, standing below in various moods of bashfulness or unconcern. Siva, with his wife Parvati, and their son, are also there, with the sacred bull Nandi lying at their feet; while before them and in various places stands the Lingam. The goddess Durga or Kali appears in various of the sculptures, and most memorably in the one which represents her famous combat with the buffalo-headed monster Mahashasura, whom she attacks riding on her lion. This is the finest monument of art in these ruins, and the figures of the monster, the lion, and the goddess, are admirably arranged and full of spirit. Of this figure of Durga it has been observed: "Her whole person, the fine fall of the shoulders, the moderately luxuriant bosom, and the sudden tapering off of the leg below the knee, contrasting with the remarkable largeness of the thigh, presents the perfect picture

of a beautiful Indian woman."* Yet this is Kali, the bloody goddess, represented in other places as black and terrible in appearance, and surrounded with symbols of the most ferocious cruelty! — but many such startling contradictions are to be met with in Hindoo theology. The elephant-headed Ganesa, god of wisdom—perhaps the most popular idol in India—appears frequently in these rock-temples, blackened by smoke and ghee; being still propitiated every Friday with lustrations of ghee, cocoa-nut oil, and certain rites and prayers. Another rock is sculptured all over with innumerable figures of gods, men, and beasts, representing the story of "the penance of Arjuna," one of the noblest and most famous in all Hindoo legend. How long those structures have stood it is hard to say,—for on some of the temples inscriptions are to be met with in a language now unintelligible, even to scholars, in the south of India. A vast population and wealthy civilisation must once have existed there; but naught remains save the deserted temples and the luxurious beauty of the spot—thick green shrubbery, a-glow with flowers of the most brilliant colours, everywhere obstructing the paths; while overhead the palm-trees wave their graceful branches, "like a beautiful woman nodding with drowsiness."

But if here, too, the worship has forsaken the shrines, it is a transference only, not (as in the case of the rock-temples of Bombay) an extinction. Though Buddhism have vanished, the worship of Siva, Vishnoo, Kali, and countless minor deities—constituting the popular religion of the Hindoos—is as prevalent as ever in Southern India. And though new temples are but rarely erected, and not a few of the old ones suffer from want of repairs, the number, magnitude, and magnificence of those existing are calculated to fill with amazement the mind of the beholder. The country, says Fergusson, "is covered

* BRUCE'S *Scenes and Sights in the East*—a racy and clever book, containing, among other things, most graphic sketches of the religious festivals of Southern India.

with temples, which, for extent and the amount of labour bestowed on them, may rival Karnac and the most extensive temples of Egypt, and surpass even the cathedrals of the Middle Ages in complexity of design and variety of detail. Their relative merit as works of art is another question, which I fear must be decided against them; but as specimens of patient devotional labour, they stand as yet unrivalled in the architectural history of the world." Rising from a square base, the larger temples tower aloft story above story, in an elongated pyramid, capped by a kind of small florid dome. In the centre of the ground-story is the cube-shaped sanctuary, containing the idol or symbol of the god; the rest of the ground-story consists of pillared spaces and enclosures, for the services of the temple; while the entire external surface of these edifices is covered with elaborate carvings and sculpture, in which may be seen all the strange stories of the Hindoo pantheon. The great temple at Tanjore, the finest in the South (being almost the only one in which the *vimana* or actual temple is the principal object, round which the subordinate ones are grouped in such a manner as to make a great and consistent whole), rises through no less than fourteen stories to a height of 200 feet. These temples do not stand by themselves, but each is enclosed in a rectangular court or series of courts, sometimes covering an immense extent of ground, and enclosing lesser temples and buildings of various shape and size. The gateways to these courts (called *gopuras*) —which quite resemble the *vimanas*, or temples, only being oblong instead of square—and the vast pillared halls within (called *choultries*), some of them comprising 1000 columns, are the most striking adjuncts to the temple, and sometimes throw it entirely into the shade. The temple at Seringham has no less than seven enclosures, adorned by twenty-three gateways—the outermost of these enclosures being nearly 1000 yards square, and its gateways being among the most stupendous buildings in the south of India—towering buildings 130 feet wide by 100 deep, pierced in the ground-story with an entrance the

jambs of which are single granite slabs upwards of forty feet in height, roofed by others twenty-four feet long! Viewed externally, however, such a temple is a congeries of gate-pyramids without object; and on entering (as the lesser enclosures have lesser gateways), you pass from the most magnificent structures to those which are less and less so, till the minimum is reached in the temple itself. The vast colonnades or pillared halls at Tinnevelly, Chillumbrum, Seringham, Ramisseram, and other places, vary in the number of their pillars from 600 to 1000; that of Trimul Naik at Madura cost nearly a million sterling, and took twenty-two years for its erection. These pillars almost always consist of a hard close-grained granite, yet are covered with sculpture from the base to the capital; and in most instances no two pillars are alike—thus combining a symmetry of general effect with an endless and bewildering variety in the detail. In these colonnades the dancing-girls attached to the temple at times dance and sing, or the idol-gods at stated seasons take an airing; but by far the most important purpose which they serve is when used as nuptial halls, in which the mystic union of the male and female divinities is celebrated once a-year!

Having seen the shrines, behold the FESTIVALS. Unlike the silent and long-forsaken temples of Egypt, Greece, and Italy, the architectural grandeur of these Hindoo pagodas is enhanced by the presence of enthusiastic crowds of worshippers. The sound of a bell or gong, or of the sacred shell, or the shrill pipe, generally indicates the hours of the priests' attendance at the temples. At such times the priests are to be seen officiating at the shrines, where, amid a din of music and the smoke of fragrant incense, they are uttering sacred invocations or incantations, and presenting the offerings of the worshippers; while attendant votaries occupy the courts and corridors, and the ghâts of the beautiful tanks are thronged with men and women engaged in their ablutions. But it is during the great festivals, which sometimes last eight or ten days, that one gets the best idea of

the spirit as well as ceremonial of the Hindoo religion. On these occasions the people throng together in myriads, sometimes to the number of a hundred thousand,—all dressed in their best, as for a holiday where enjoyment is devotion. To see such festivals in their full glory, one should go to Juggernaut, in Orissa, or Conjeveram, and the other holy cities of the south. In Conjeveram alone there are no less than 126 temples, small and great, of which 108 are dedicated to Siva, and the remainder to Vishnoo; and as the pretty cottages of the inhabitants are overtopped by stately trees, the whole city, at a little distance, presents to the eye a crowd of magnificent white temples, mingled with the freshly-green foliage of the palm-trees. It is worth while to journey from Madras to witness a festival in the "golden city," or a shorter drive may suffice to Trivatore or other neighbouring place. If you approach the scene of the festival at night, you find the road illuminated by lanterns hung on garlands stretched across it from tree to tree; and booths erected along the road-side, with figures and paintings of gods and goddesses in them, perhaps not of the most delicate description. Probably you are the only European amongst the crowds who, on foot or in all variety of Oriental cars, throng the way; but you have nothing to fear—your things may lie unguarded all night, and it will be unusual if even the smallest trifle be abstracted,—the natives will rather take your presence as a compliment than as an intrusion, and probably garlands of flowers will be thrown round your neck next day as you walk about to see the sights. The houses are fresh painted and decorated with garlands, while floral arches span the streets, which are crowded with the joyous worshippers. The women wear flowers, and especially the white blossoms of the jasmine, in their beautiful hair; and their arms, neck, and ankles are loaded with jewellery. The men are likewise in their gayest attire; and nowhere do the rich colours of Oriental costume appear in such brilliant variety. The main feature in these festivals is the processions of the idol-gods. The idols, decked with flowers, are carried about in gorgeously-

painted cars, generally with two priests fanning them,—preceded by dancing-girls, a band of noisy musicians, bareheaded Brahmins walking hand-in-hand and singing hymns in honour of the god, and the elephants of the temple, gay with crimson and orange trappings, their very trunks elaborately painted for the occasion. Sometimes cannon fire at intervals; and as the idol-god, thus escorted, approaches, the people shout, and in long lines throw themselves down before him in reverence. Half-festival and half-fair, it is a curious scene that spreads around. Toys, luscious sweetmeats, and betel are sold at the stalls,—numerous go-rounds and swinging-boats perform their evolutions, filled with beautiful and artistically-dressed children,—dancing-girls in their peculiar costume mingle in the crowd or dance before the idol,—youths leap past you with towers of flowers on their heads,—and boys, dressed up like tigers, go springing about, the crowd rushing to and fro as if threatened by the actual animal. Other spectacles there are of a less pleasing kind, but met with at almost all public assemblages in India. Fakirs go amongst the crowds with shoes stuck full of nails, but singing lustily and playing on the vina all the while,—others dance about, extinguishing torches against their bare breasts,—others swing to and fro aloft with a rope round their waist; and beggars and deformed or diseased children are to be seen, hideously painted, for the purpose of attracting notice. At night fireworks of the most beautiful kind are set off in vast quantities; rockets course through the air, and pyrotechnic devices, sometimes showing the figure of the god, blaze off in front of the temple or choultry where the idol reposes. The little temples in the middle of the tanks are illuminated as the god is carried, amid the clash of cymbals, in nocturnal procession around the basin of flashing waters; while the glare of innumerable torches, and the blaze of Indian lights—white, blue, orange, crimson, and green—change the darkness into an almost insufferable light.

Such is worship in Southern India, where Hindooism exists

in greatest pomp and circumstance. The temples of India, like those of all ancient nations, are regarded as the abodes of the gods; and the IDOLS obtain various degrees of veneration,—some classes worshipping them as actual gods, others as full of the divine presence, and others as mere symbols or venerated accessories of devotion. Idol-shops are very common in Hindoo towns and villages. In passing along the streets, you may see the idol-maker—perhaps a Brahmin, with the sacred cord round his neck and the sectarial marks on his forehead—sitting in his shop, smoking his hookah, and waiting for a customer, or else engaged in the actual manufacture of the images. These are of all sizes and of any material—metal, wood, stucco—the latter kind quite resembling the common painted casts sold in the streets of England, and, if unconsecrated, bringing about the same price. You may buy one for a halfpenny,—so that the poorest can purchase them; but the rich Hindoos spend vast sums on idols, which are frequently made of the most costly materials, inlaid with precious stones. The consecration of the idol is effected by the utterance of sacred texts, and by the touch of the priest,—also by washing the image with the water of the Ganges. The idols, or symbols, thus sanctified, are placed in the adyta of the temples, or in that part of a private house which is set apart to religion. Sometimes temporary idols are made by the worshippers themselves. A Brahmin, after squeezing a lump of the Ganges mud in his hands into something like an image, will set it up on the bank, offering it rice, fruit, flowers, and oil,—reverently bowing to it, with his hands closed together in the attitude of prayer, and with many ejaculations and invocations; and then, after a little pause, he will throw it away. In this way, also, females make a lingam for worship, and then cast it away. Such practices serve to illustrate the fact that, with a large portion of the Hindoos, idols are no more regarded as actual gods than is the crucifix in Roman Catholic countries,—sometimes less so. Doubtless there are Hindoos who imagine that the consecrated idols are

transubstantiated into the very deity,—that having ears, they may be charmed with music; having eyes, they may behold the prostrations and gesticulations of the worshippers; having nostrils, they may be regaled with odours, whether of flowers or incense; and having mouths, may partake of the viands that are spread before them. But such are not the notions of the educated and intelligent classes of the Indian population. These regard the divinity as present in the idol simply as the invisible fragrance is present in the visible flower,—as fire is present in heated metal,—as magnetic influence pervades steel. And many, like the Brahmin with his mud-idol on the banks of the Ganges, hold that the image is a mere symbol, possessed of no essential sanctity, and representing the god merely as a letter stands for an audible sound—in other words, simply by conventional usage.

The Hindoos have been called the most religious people on the face of the earth; and it is hard to deny that the feelings of devotion, and of reliance on a higher Power, which constitute the very essence of religion (considered as distinct from morality), are to be found as fully developed in India as in any country in the world. The whole system of his temple-worship is regarded by the Hindoo as of divine appointment, and therefore efficacious for the ends contemplated. Just as the southern nations of Christendom, in an hour of pressing grief or danger, throw themselves down before a crucifix, a Madonna, or the image of a saint,—or repair to the solemn solitudes of their ever-open cathedrals to implore help from above in prayer; in a similar spirit, and in an almost identical form, does the Hindoo resort to his temples for divine help amidst the exigencies common to all humanity. "In the countless vicissitudes of life," says the Rev. Mr Perceval, "the Hindoo confidently relies on the unfailing and ever-present lord and guide locally present in the venerated fane. That shrine is his light in darkness, his salvation, his stay, his succour, his bliss, his all. In extremity, as when a woman is in labour, or when dangerous symptoms

threaten a fatal termination to disease, some member of the family, probably its head, will even in the dead of night hasten to the village shrine—possibly a mere mud-hut—and in lowly reverence supplicate in a hasty petition the beneficent intervention of the powerful being whom he believes to be there specially present."* Was it not the same with the Hebrews of old, who went up to pray in the Temple at Jerusalem as if that were the only place in all the earth where God could be effectually addressed? It was reserved for Christianity to make the whole world a temple, and to reveal the Heavenly Father as equally near to us at all times and in all places.

Every nation has certain constitutional peculiarities, which give rise to practices and phases of thought very startling to others who are in such points differently constituted. The most remarkable peculiarity of this kind in the Hindoo character is its power of ASCETICISM, and its occasional delight in what, to ordinary humanity, would be severe self-torture. Monks and saints of Christendom have often subjected the body to grievous penance—secluding themselves from the happy communion of their fellows—fasting oft—and daily kneeling on the rocky floor of their cells before a crucifix, while they lacerated their backs with stripes. But all such triumphs over the instincts of our nature fade out of sight before the tremendous self-imposed tortures to be witnessed among the Indian population. Asceticism there counts its votaries by thousands, the greater proportion of whom perambulate the country as solitary mendicants. Some of these strange beings keep one or both arms extended above their heads till the muscles become so rigid and fixed as to be incapable of motion; some keep their hands closed till the nails make their way through the flesh, and completely perforate the hand; others hold up their faces to the sky till the muscles of the neck contract so as to retain the head in that position. These fanatics usually belong to the

* *The Land of the Vedas.* By the Rev. P. PERCEVAL. A compendious and admirable volume of lectures on the Hindoos.

Saiva sect; they mat or twist their hair so as to make it rise above their head, and go about either in a state of nudity, or with only a small wrapper stained with ochre. The extraordinary practices of these fanatics are well exemplified by what Mr Perceval saw at Ramisseram, on occasion of one of the great periodic festivals. "Some were literally interred in an ordinary posture,—others were buried with the head downwards, and only the legs from the knees above ground; one sat on an iron frame in which were fixed iron spikes which pierced his flesh; some had a pan of burning coal on the head, and bore it along in the crowd,—while others lay prostrate on their backs, with a vessel full of burning embers placed on the breast; and one was performing the penance of the Five Fires, being seated in the midst of four, with the fifth, the burning sun, pouring its rays on his naked head. One man had an iron collar round his neck, on whose margin were planted iron spikes." Sometimes a devotee, stretching himself on the ground on his back, and placing a handful of moist earth on his under-lip, plants in it some grains of mustard-seed; and then, lying perfectly motionless, without food or drink, he exposes himself to the heat of day and dews of night, till the seed germinates,—which is generally about the fourth day! The variety of these feats or penances is endless, and their nature is very astounding. But it is absurd to regard them as torture, in the ordinary meaning of the word, to those who practise them. The Hindoo of a fanatical temperament takes to such practices from a native instinct; he trains himself to them with as much satisfaction as our pugilists and athletes practise their various forms of gymnastics; and the crowds at the festivals look upon these exhibitions of the triumph of the soul over the flesh with as much hilarity and complacency as an English assembly witness the feats of the circus. We Britons do not understand how this can be; but quite as little do the quiescent Hindoos understand how reasonable beings can have a passion for running, leaping, cricketing, fox-hunting, and other violent

and fatiguing pursuits, which would be worse torture to the Hindoo than an occasional turn on the swinging-hooks. As the Englishman, by native instinct, delights to develop in skilful exercise the muscular strength of this body, so the Hindoo passionately seeks to develop the powers of the soul—of the spirit within, which he holds to be a power superior to those by which Nature works in the world around him. Many of the feats performed by these *yogees* or devotees are really marvellous —indeed incredible to Europeans who have not witnessed them, or who are not conversant with the abundance of testimony by which even the most startling are attested. How may man become superhuman? how may he become God?—is, in fact, the great question which the religious philosophy of India seeks to answer; and it is amazing to what triumphs of the spirit over the flesh this idea has given birth. We cannot stop at present to show the connection between this constitutional peculiarity and the various creeds and philosophies of India; but we would suggest, in regard to such violations of one half our nature, whether it be not a necessary consequence, that when man seeks to make himself more than man, he generally sinks into something less.

It is at festivals in honour of the goddess Kali that exhibitions of devotional self-torture are most frequent. Kali is the most horrible of all the Hindoo idols. Brahma is a deity of too neutral a character to be much thought of,—Vishnoo is essentially a beneficent and joyous deity,—Siva, though a monster in his character of the Destroyer, is most useful and popular as the god of reproduction and sexualism. But Kali, as it seems to an English mind, has not one good point about her. She is usually represented as a black or dark-blue female, with blood-streaked countenance and dishevelled hair, dancing on the prostrate body of her husband Siva. One of her arms (of which she has four) holds a sword, another grasps by the hair a human head; all her three eyes (she has one in her forehead) are full of wrath—human victims dangle as orna-

ments from her ears, and her necklace and girdle are composed of skulls. But mankind, instead of being logical, are in the mass highly inconsequential beings; and however dismal we may take the goddess Kali to be, it is certain that the Hindoos flock to her festivals as to scenes of enjoyment. It must be said, too, that however ferocious the appearance of her idol, it represents her fresh from the beneficent deed of slaying the giants, whose blood she has drunk; and the lolling of her tongue is held emblematic of her shame on discovering that, in her blind fury, she is trampling on her husband. The third hand of the image, too, which is spread open, indicates her bestowal of blessings upon her worshippers, while with the fourth she is forbidding fear; so that, in truth, like most of the Hindoo gods, she is better than she looks—and much need! The worship of Durga, one form of Kali, which is celebrated in autumn, ushers in a season of the greatest rejoicing amongst her followers. "Durga is then believed, to the great joy of the world, to be married; and the voluptuous and indelicate dances which are performed before her, are meant to entice her to the propagation of children, who are to fight with and overcome the evil spirits who injure mankind."* This is the most splendid and expensive of the Hindoo festivals. Numerous animals—buffaloes, sheep, goats, &c.—are sacrificed on each of the three days of the festival; and after all the animals have been slain, the multitude daub their bodies with the mud and gore, and then dance about like Bacchanalian furies. During this festival all business is suspended throughout the country, and universal festivity, for the most part of a lascivious complexion, prevails. The houses of the wealthy Hindoos are at night splendidly illuminated, and thrown open to visitors of all kinds,—respectable Europeans being always welcomed with attention and gratitude. Immense sums of money are expended on these festivals,—much being given in charity, and in feeding and clothing priests and beggars—much in feasting

* BRUCE'S *Sights and Scenes in the East.*

—and not a little is lavished on the nautch girls, or bayadères, who dance before the idol, to satisfy the devotion and gratify the senses of the company.

The general character of the worship of Kali, however, is of a different kind. It is in her honour that the Saiva sect perform the Churruk Pooja, or "whirling worship,"—the most common religious martyrdom in India, and which is to be witnessed nearly all over India, from the banks of the Ganges to Cape Comorin. The devotees at this festival allow two large iron hooks to be fastened into the fleshy part of their backs, immediately below the shoulder-blades; a linen bandage is then frequently (but not always) tied over the part to prevent the flesh giving way; after which the devotees are hoisted, by means of a rope attached to a high pole erected on a platform, to a fearful height in the air, and made to gyrate in wide circles. They generally remain up, swinging about, for fifteen or twenty minutes, but they are lowered at any time on their making a sign. Instances sometimes occur in which the flesh and muscles of the back give way, and the devotee is dashed to the ground with fatal violence; but accidents are rare, and the ordeal is not regarded with the apprehension or aversion which we should expect. In many cases the saints are "old hands," who perform the rite from motives of gain and reputation, and who go through their martyrdom with great cheerfulness and self-satisfaction. Seldom do even novices wince when the hooks are fastened, and the subsequent swinging in the air is invariably borne with composure, often with enthusiasm. Sometimes the devotee smokes his pipe while whirling in his lofty gyrations! It is usual for the devotee to take up with him fruits and flowers in his girdle, which he throws down to the crowd, who—especially the female portion—laughing and shouting with delight, rush eagerly to catch them in their hands, or in umbrellas inverted to receive them. Barren women are especially anxious to obtain the fruit scattered by these devotees of Siva, as a means of wiping away their reproach;

and wealthy childless ladies frequently send their servants to the festival to procure some of the auspicious fruit for their mistresses to eat. Rewards in a future life are thought to attend the performance of this singular worship ; but with the exception of what may be called the professional martyrs, the greater portion of those who go through the Churruk Pooja do so in fulfilment of a vow made to obtain some temporal good. The purely disinterested motives and tender affection displayed in many of these cases cannot fail to excite our warmest sympathy. Among the votaries at one of these festivals, we read of a man who, though childless himself, had vowed to undergo the torture in order to save the life of a younger sister's child. "The sister, with her little one in her arms, perfectly restored to health, was present ; and her looks sufficiently bespoke her intense gratitude and love for the self-denying brother who thus redeemed the vow he had made for her sake." The next was "a young, delicately-formed, sweet-looking woman, who offered herself to this exposure and agony for the sake of a relative no more nearly connected with her than her husband's brother." Another votary was an aged mother, whose prayers (she believed) had saved the life of her son. "The vow had been made, and the deliverance effected, eleven years before ; but the poor people had never been able till then to incur the expenses of the offering to the god, and the feast with which these solemnities are always closed. With the utmost heroism this aged woman endured the whole, shouting aloud with the spectators, and scattering her flowers with flurried enthusiasm. Her son, a man of thirty years, was present ; and in a state of greater excitement than his mother, to whom he paid the most anxious attention, and to whose devotion he evidently believed he owed the continuance of his life."*

A faith in penances seems deeply rooted in the human mind,

* A personal narrative given in the *Sunday at Home*, a periodical which ably fulfils its object, and in which some very graphic sketches of Eastern life have appeared.

departing only as our views of God become higher and holier. And while we shudder at the Churruk Pooja of India, we must not forget that it proceeds from no other principle than that which produced the Flagellants and the many other mistaken devotees and ascetics of the Christian Church. And with this difference, that over these Indian tortures there is thrown a joyousness and enthusiasm which never characterised asceticism in Europe. In truth, as ordinarily witnessed, the Churruk Pooja savours more of sport than of martyrdom,—the votaries are cheerful, or do not complain, and the crowds look on with delight, in a more edifying and not more concerned spirit than we do in witnessing the painful gymnastic feats and dizzy gyrations of the circus. Such spectacles, however, cannot but fill the European beholder with deep regret at the existence of rites so cruel and superstitious, mingled with admiration and sympathy for the noble motives which often inspire the ignorant devotees, and with astonishment at the singular firmness and peculiar constitution which enable the Hindoo to bear so unflinchingly these many and terrible forms of self-torture.

But to understand the hideousness of the Kali worship, one must witness the proceedings which, during the Churruk Pooja festival, take place in her temple at Calcutta—the celebrated Kali Ghat. The swinging on the hooks may be a mere outburst of misguided asceticism, kindred to the penances practised of old in Europe; but the rites we are about to describe manifestly have been derived from some primitive DEMON-WORSHIP. On entering the precincts of the temple (which has no attractions of an architectural kind), Brahmins are seen standing to receive the free-will offerings of the people, who flow past in eager crowds, receiving in return for their money consecrated flowers. Within is the hideous image of the goddess; and hard by the shrine some men stand with iron spikes, canes, rods, &c. Groups of devotees—ten or a dozen at a time—come up to these men to be operated on. One man is pierced through in either side; a couple of canes are then inserted,

and, their ends being held by two of his companions, he dances away as if in a frenzy. Another has his tongue pierced, and passes through the aperture a living snake; another has his arm perforated, and passes through it an iron rod; and another passes an iron rod through his protruded tongue. Group after group press forward to be thus treated. At length, all the groups being conspicuously arranged on a platform, the goats for the sacrifice are decapitated, and the court swims with blood. Strange ingredients are then thrown on the fire. As the smoke and flame ascend, discordant instruments clash forth uproarious music; and in the midst of the din, the chief actors commence their gesticulations, and heighten their voluntary inflictions, by pulling the rods, canes, spikes, snakes, to and fro in the lacerated flesh, till streams of blood pour forth afresh; and the crowd become frantic with excitement, and shout, "Victory to Kali! victory to the great Kali!" Afterwards they leave the temple to parade in similar fashion in the streets; and nothing can be more unearthly than to witness these hideous processions, accompanied by a horrid din of trumpets, gongs, drums, fifes, and cymbals, parading in the chief thoroughfares of Calcutta.

This bloody rite — so different from the worship of the pure Brahminical race in northern and central India, or even of the Brahminised Tamul race in the south — seems to us to be a remnant of the virtual demon-worship of the aboriginal inhabitants of the peninsula. The Brahminical faith abhors all bloodshed; and its sacrificial offerings consist only of fruits, flowers, and other vegetable substances. And if we unhesitatingly ascribe the gorgeous pomp of modern Hindooism, especially as witnessed in the south, to the gay and pomp-loving Tamul race, we have still less hesitation in ascribing the demoniacal rites of the Kali Ghat to a still earlier race, who have left their blood as a bad leaven in the population of Lower Bengal. Kali and her worship clearly belong to the rude aborigines of India, who still

linger in various parts of the country, and who almost everywhere exhibit a religion of demon-worship conjoined with bloody and often human sacrifices. Indeed, it seems to us to be within the limits of fair conjecture that Kali, that hideous relic of savagery, is the dread Nirritti mentioned in the Vedas —goddess of the "black Asuras," whom the "white-complexioned friends of Indra" found in possession of the Gangetic valley; a deity so terrible, that even the stout-hearted Aryans have left on record such prayers as the following,—"Keep far from us Nirritti with repellant looks!" "Let not the most powerful and indestructible Nirritti destroy us!"

Hindooism—we speak of its religious externals—is a strange medley, varying in complexion from province to province, and in some places exhibiting features directly opposed to its general character. Wherever the aboriginal element predominates, the religion is dark and bloody; wherever the Tamul race extends, it is cheerful, gorgeous, and licentious; wherever the pure Hindoo is in the ascendant, it is lofty in speculation and gentle in its rites, but overlaid with absurd prescriptions of ritual and social usage, which are inculcated as divine. Passing from the tinge of demon-worship in Lower Bengal, we find this grim aboriginal element deepening as we enter the hilly province of Orissa, forming the little-known border-region between the presidencies of Bengal and Madras. On the sea-coast of that region, guarded from holiday visitors by the terrible Coromandel surf, stands the famous Black Pagoda, covered from base to summit with sculptures, grossly lascivious even for India; and a little further south, on low sand-hills backed by most luxuriant woods, rise the still more celebrated temples of Juggernaut, which, when viewed from the sea, appear three lofty circular buildings surrounded by several smaller ones. Every foot of the town is holy ground; and the whole of the land for twenty miles around is held free of rent, on the tenure of performing certain services connected with the temple. *Maths*, or religious establishments, having low-pillared veran-

das in front, line the principal street, with clumps of trees interspersed; and at the end of the street, which is very wide, rises the grand temple within a spacious square area enclosed by a lofty wall. The enclosure is entered by a grand gateway, from which a broad flight of steps leads up to a terrace one hundred and fifty yards square; and upon this platform stands the great pagoda, thirty feet square at the base, and rising in a tapering elliptical curve to the height of two hundred feet from the ground, or one hundred and eighty from the terrace. Several other temples of all sizes, dedicated to various deities, stand within the enclosure, most of them conical in shape, and crowned with white domes. Krishna (one of the incarnations of Vishnoo) is the chief object of worship here; and from his title, Juggernaut, or Lord of the World, the great temple is denominated; but it is shared in joint tenancy with Siva and his wife and sister Subhadra, which is but another name for Kali. The three idols which represent these deities are blocks of wood about six feet high, each surmounted by a frightful human countenance—Krishna's block being painted dark-blue, Siva's white, Subhadra's yellow. Each is provided with a rude chariot, or lofty platform mounted on wheels—that of Juggernaut being eighty-four feet square and forty-four feet high, mounted on sixteen wheels; while those of the two other idols are almost as large. A dozen festivals are held here in the course of the year; but the chief one is the *Rath Jatra*, which takes place every spring, when the idols are taken on their *raths* or cars to visit their country-house, about a mile and a half distant. Thousands of men, women, and children draw them along by means of cables fastened to the cars; while Brahmins, stationed on the platforms beside the idols, sing and recite lascivious stories, accompanied by gestures, amid the shouts and applause of the multitudes. A hundred thousand people usually assemble at this festival, many of whom come from great distances; and, partly from their poverty and willingness to pay all the exactions of the priests, and partly from

the natural perils and hardships of the journey, no inconsiderable number of votaries—some allege about ten thousand—annually perish in making this pilgrimage. Every year, in former times, devotees used to sacrifice their lives in honour of the idols by throwing themselves under the moving wheels; but the humanity of the British Government put a stop to such fanatical practices.

Self-immolation is not foreign to modern Brahminism; nevertheless, in order to view in their true relation the human sacrifices once prevalent at Juggernaut, it should be kept in mind that by far the greater portion of Orissa is peopled by aboriginal tribes,—the Hindoo or Brahminical race being confined to the sea-coast and some of the valleys. Indeed, the great seat of the remnants of the aboriginal races of India is in the Vindhya mountain-range, of which the Orissa hills are the eastern extremity, and which extends in a broad belt from sea to sea, separating Hindostan (northern India) from the southern and peninsular portion of the country. It is in this upland but luxuriant region that the Koles, Beels, Khonds, and other tribes are to be found, existing in peaceful and settled communities, over which the Brahminical race never acquired any ascendancy, and some of which are still unsubdued even by the all-penetrating arms and influence of the British. The religion of the Khonds, which is the best known to us, illustrates that tendency to a cruel demon-worship which we have mentioned as characteristic of the primitive population of India. No idols or temples are to be seen amongst the Khonds; they regard such things as absurd, and prefer to connect the special presence of their gods with certain groves, fountains, and rocks. The priesthood may be assumed by any one who asserts that he has been divinely called to the office, and who authenticates his pretensions by lying in a state of stupor or trance for ten or fourteen days, during which period his soul is supposed to be absent, and in the divine presence. They believe in a Supreme Being, the God of Light, who made to himself a con-

sort, the Earth-goddess, who, on the creation of man, became so jealous that she has ever since continued to contend with the power, and thwart the beneficent designs, of the Supreme. In short, this rebellious deity, Tari Pennu, stands in nearly the same relation to Boora Pennu, the God of Light, as Satan does to God in the Christian theology. Kali also figures among their divinities. Animal sacrifices are offered to the Supreme ; and the chief feast in honour of him is held about the time of the rice harvest, when for five days every one eats freely of fermented rice, which produces an intoxicating effect; wild dances, accompanied by stunning music, are kept up day and night, and lascivious enjoyment of all kinds is indulged in as right and pleasing in the sight of God. The worship of the evil Earth-goddess is of another sort, and embraces as its chief rite human sacrifices, which are made periodically by the tribes, and also on special occasions, in order to appease the wrath of the cruel Tari. The victims (called Meriahs) must not be Khonds, but are purchased or kidnapped, generally when children, from the lower class of the Hindoos. They may be of either sex, and, as consecrated persons, are treated with the greatest kindness. To a Meriah youth a portion of land with farming stock may be assigned, also a wife, herself a victim ; or if he form an attachment for the wife or daughter of a Khond, the relatives regard it as a special favour. What a strange life is this!—reared for death, yet treated with all that usually makes life happy! The Meriahs almost never attempt to escape. When sacrificed, the victim is cut into pieces ; and each head of a family obtains a shred of flesh to bury in his fields, in order to mollify the Earth-goddess, and make them fertile. Efforts have been made by the British Government to procure the discontinuance of these savage rites, and in part with success ; several of the sacrificing tribes having been converted to the theology of their non-sacrificing brethren, which maintains that the Earth-goddess, though opposed to the Supreme, is so subordinated to his will that she cannot hurt those whom he protects. But several generations

must probably elapse before the rude population of this extensive and secluded hill-region can be brought fully under the controlling power and influence of British civilisation.

Having seen the worship of the gay Tamul race of the south, and glanced at the bloody rites which mark the presence of the aboriginal tribes, let us descend from the broad region of the Vindhya hills into the immense plains of Bengal and Upper India. Here we find ourselves in "Hindostan," the country of the pure Hindoos, and native seat of BRAHMINISM. On the advance of this invading people, thirty-five centuries ago, into the Gangetic plains, they appear to have gradually swept the aboriginal tribes southwards into the Vindhya hills, and eastwards into the cul-de-sac of Lower Bengal. We have already remarked on the tinge which this aboriginal leaven has imparted to Hindoo worship in the delta of the Ganges; so we shall at once take our way up that stream to Benares, the fountainhead of Brahminical learning, the *alma mater* of rigid Hindooism. It is a city of temples, pundits, and devotees. Besides 330 intrusive Mohammedan mosques, there are no less than 1000 Hindoo temples, some of these of good size and imposing appearance, others stuck like shrines at the angles of the streets, and others on the ghats or broad flights of steps which for nearly three miles line the bank of the river. In the streets, which are narrow as alleys, and nearly roofed in by the projecting upper stories of the houses, ever and anon one meets a Brahmin with the sacred bull; while around the shrines are posted ascetics of as revolting appearance as chalk, cow-dung, matted locks, twisted limbs, and other hideous attitudes of penance can show. Formerly this sacred city was a favourite place for the performance of suttee, or the burning of widows; and at the time of Heber's visit, self-immolation by drowning in the Ganges was likewise not infrequent. On many of the house-fronts, besides fantastic paintings of men, women, bulls, elephants, &c., gods and goddesses appear in gaudy colours. Here, as elsewhere, the multitude take great delight in the

religious festivals; the chief of these being the Ram Lila, which represents the triumph of Rama over the gigantic demon Ravan, who is personated by a huge ogre-like figure, filled with explosive combustibles, and blown up at the close of the performance. At the Duwallee festival, which marks the close of the mercantile year, those engaged in commerce carefully cleanse and decorate the exteriors of their houses, and at night there is a universal illumination. "The city then appears like a creation of the Fire-king, the view from the water affording the most superb and remarkable spectacle imaginable. The outlines of the whole city are marked in streams of fire; and the coruscations of light shoot up into the dark-blue sky above, and tremble in long undulations on the rippling waves below." Muttra, on the Jumna, the birthplace of Krishna, is a still more sacred city to the Hindoo than Benares, which place it much resembles in the style of its streets and buildings. Here, as in all the famous cities of Hindostan, the pomp and glory of Hindooism have long been on the wane, and indeed were damaged irreparably eight centuries ago on the invasion of the Mohammedans. To have an idea of this sacred city in its prime, we must recur to what Mahmoud of Ghuznee wrote of it in the year 1017:—"There are here," said that arch-destroyer of Hindoo idols and temples, "1000 edifices, as firm as the faith of the faithful, most of them of marble; besides innumerable temples: nor is it likely this city has attained its present condition but at the expense of many millions of dinars; nor could such another be constructed under a period of two centuries." In the course of his plundering, Mahmoud found here five golden idols, with eyes of rubies, valued at 50,000 dinars; another image, when melted, produced 98,300 miskals of pure gold; and besides these there were about 100 idols of silver, which loaded as many camels. A century ago Muttra was again ravaged by the Affghans, so that we need not be surprised that this most sacred of Hindoo cities should not now appear equal to its reputation. Numbers of sacred bulls here

go at large without owners; peacocks and paroquets flutter about; and monkeys swarm in the ruins, sitting, running, or playing on the tops of the houses, and skipping from roof to roof across the streets,—these latter animals being protected and fed in honour of the monkey-god Hanuman, who assisted Rama in his conquest of Ceylon.

The Hindoo temples of northern India are greatly inferior in number and splendour to those of the south. The conquests and long-enduring rule of the Mohammedans in the former region may, to a considerable extent, account for this inferiority in religious architecture. For besides the fact that, beneath the cold shade of a hostile religion, much money and patronage that would have been devoted to the native religion would be diverted into other channels, so as to hinder the waste and accidents of time from being adequately repaired, it must be remembered that the Mohammedans, when fierce in the zeal of their new faith, were fanatic destroyers of the temples of the subjugated population; and afterwards, when they came to take a calmer view of things, they saw no better way of rearing noble mosques to Allah than by reconstructing the beautiful temples which the Hindoos had erected to Vishnoo or Siva. The Hindoo builders gave to all parts of their work an unsurpassable finish. Granite and marble were the materials on which they worked; and even on the imperishably hard surface of gigantic temples of the former stone, we often find every inch covered with carvings and sculptures, every line of which is still as sharp as the day it was cut. They were a race that "built like giants and finished like jewellers." Every block of stone in their stately buildings, whether of marble or of granite, was made to fit into the adjoining blocks with the most perfect nicety, so that mortar was hardly needed; and the pillars, friezes, domes, indeed the whole structure, might be taken down and reconstructed without difficulty. This is what the Mohammedans did; and some of the finest mosques in northern India, says Fergusson, are just Hindoo

temples with a new arrangement of the pillars. But apart from these causes for the inferiority of the religious architecture of Hindooism to the north of the Vindhya mountains, there is much reason to believe that the main cause is to be found in a diversity of national character. The pure Brahminical people, who, bringing with them their Vedas, settled in Oude and the whole region between Benares and the Sutlej, had a type of mind of a much more spiritual kind than the pomp-loving race who built the gorgeous temples of the south. The typical Brahmin was a man of more abstract cast of mind than the Tamulee; he was more enamoured of the spirit than of the external pomps of religion, and gave more of his strength to the rearing of lofty speculations than to the building of vast temples. The Mussulman also, compared with the Tamul race, is restrained in the character of his religious architecture; and, from his intense aversion to everything like idolatry, he wholly abjures the representations of men and animals, which give so much richness to the architecture of the Hindoos.

Modern Hindooism is quite a medley. In appearance, the number of the deities worshipped is very great; but most of these are but other names for the same god, the smaller being incarnations or transformations of the greater. This peculiar feature—so characteristic of Hindooism—gives to Indian mythology a haziness and maziness which set arrangement and strict definition at defiance. When you grasp a god you are almost sure to find him somebody else. The very monkey-god Hanuman seems at times to be Rama,—Rama is Krishna,—Krishna is Vishnoo—Vishnoo a phase of the Supreme. It is the most Protean mythology in the world. It is Pantheism personified. All the attributes of the ONE, and the leading phenomena of his work the Universe, are regarded as individual deities by the multitude; but the more enlightened, better able to discern the one in the many, have fewer gods; while the most enlightened see in the All only the ONE—whom they style Brahm. It is wonderful how widespread in India is this

knowledge of the one God, and how noble a philosophy is associated with it; but in the faith of the multitudes, the outer crust of the Indian religions, to which we at present chiefly restrict our review, the grand summit or crowning dome of the Hindoo pantheon is the divine Triad, consisting of Brahma, Vishnoo, and Siva. It is to be remarked here—and we shall give the explanation afterwards—that although reverenced at a spot in Ajmere, and also at that hyena's den, Bithoor, there are no temples erected to Brahma in any part of India, and Vishnoo and Siva divide the worship of the Hindoos.

It is remarkable that although the Temples of India are distinguished by their grandeur and beauty, the Idols are the most frightful and grotesque in the world. Why the one should be so noble and the other so despicable, we shall not attempt to explain; but taking the temple and the idol together, we find in the religious art and architecture of India the same perplexing incongruity, the same medley of the grand and beautiful with the mean and the repulsive, which characterises its religious literature. The Hindoo is a more deeply religious being than was the ancient Greek. The latter was too much impressed with the dignity of man to be so open to a sense of supernal powers as the Hindoo, to whom man is but a leaf blown to and fro by the breath of Omnipotence, a mere atom of a thought in the mind of the Supreme. In his exquisitely noble and beautiful idols the Greek adored the divinity of his own nature—of humanity; whereas the Hindoo's awful sense of the superhuman, of something unutterably superior to mortals, renders the workmanship of the idol a thing of no moment, and he bows before the painted block of wood with deeper sense of a divine presence than the Greek had when in ecstasy before his sublime Zeus or his radiant Apollo. Doubtless a decline in the arts—a torpor of the æsthetic faculty, which has been stealing over the subjugated Hindoos for centuries—may have something to do with this; but it is quite possible that ten or twenty centuries ago, when

the art of sculpture was practised with much success, the idols of the multitude, carried about on the *raths*, were just as rude and hideous as now.

The Hindoos are fond of symbolism, but in their idols it is of a rude and commonplace kind. The Greek in his idol made the face and form of the god expressive of his character; but modern Hindooism tags on its symbols to the figure as accessories. A multiplicity of arms is the common form of symbolising power and divinity. All the leading gods—Brahma, Vishnoo, Siva, Kali—are represented with four arms. Brahma has also four faces, and is generally pictured riding on a swan, holding a copy of the Veda,—his colour being red, possibly in reference to his emblem the sun. Vishnoo is represented of the colour of a dark cloud,—is ornamented with jewels and garlands—and rides on a mythical animal, half-eagle and half-man, having in his hands a lotus and other emblems. His avatars, or interpositions in human form for the benefit of mankind, are variously spoken of as ten or twenty-four; and for each of these he is differently represented. Siva is three-eyed,* wears a tiger's skin and a necklace of skulls, and is usually represented by the poets as delighting in warfare and blood. But the homage paid to him is quite of a different kind. It is paid to him as the deity who presides over reproduction or generation; in token of which he is represented riding on a white bull, and his emblem the Lingam receives the homage of both sexes in all parts of India. Each of these deities is represented accompanied by his goddess-wife,

* "This emblem of the eye in Siva's forehead," says Mr Bruce, "owes its origin to an extremely fine story in the Hindoo mythology. One day Parvati, lying in the bosom of her lord, playfully placed her hands over his eyes —those eyes by which the world is illuminated. It was but for a moment. But a minute with the gods is as a thousand years with mortal men, and for a thousand years the world was buried in darkness. In mercy to mankind, and in order to prevent so frightful an occurrence in future, the destroying god—who, when it pleases him, can be as benevolent as the best-natured of the divinities—struck out a third or supplementary eye in the centre of his forehead."—*Scenes and Sights in the East*, p. 108.

who is always depicted sitting in his arms little bigger than a doll. Brahma, we have said, has no sect; but the followers of the two other deities distinguish themselves by sectarial marks on the forehead,—the Vaishnavas being marked with a trident, all white but the middle prong, which is bright yellow; and the Saivas having three horizontal stripes of white, with a dark circle in the centre. In the writings of these two sects there is a good deal of mutual abuse and denunciation. "Those who profess the worship of Siva, and those who follow this doctrine, are heretics," says the Bhagavat. "From even looking at Vishnoo the wrath of Siva is kindled, and from his wrath we fall assuredly into a horrible hell; let not, therefore, the name of Vishnoo ever be pronounced," retorts a Purana of the Saiva sect. But whatever hard sayings may appear in their writings, these pagan sects agree excellently,—each frequently takes part in the festivals of the other, and not a few persons wear on the forehead the sectarial marks of Vishnoo and Siva united. In truth polytheism is, by its nature, ever tolerant; monotheism, almost necessarily, is the reverse. The former recognises gods in all nature, and of every character; one more or less is of no consequence, and the polytheist lets every one (like himself) choose the deity most in consonance with his own character. You may speak of Jesus beside the car of Juggernaut. The monotheist, on the other hand, holding that there is but one God, cannot admit of any other, and seldom of any ideas of that one but his own. Thus, in India, where these two opposite faiths come in contact, we see the Mussulman, stern and rigid in his faith of the one God, looking with scowling abhorrence upon the rites of the Hindoos, and ever wishing at heart that he were able to convert all those pagans at the sword's point; while the polytheistic Hindoos, although inflexible in their socio-religious system of Caste, regard with perfect tolerance the worship of Allah, and often mingle in crowds in the festivals of Islam.

The ritual of Brahminism is too burdensome to be attended

to by ordinary human nature. As set forth in the Code of Manu, it appears rather an ideal model than as the actual ritual of a class, much less of a nation. Such a ritual, however, was typical of the people; for if ever there were a people possessed of the personal self-denial and religious devotedness equal to cope with burdens so onerous, it is the Hindoos. In India, as in other countries, the services of religion are more or less attended to according to the social position and greater or less zeal on the part of its votaries. In Bengal and the northern provinces, bathing of a morning in the river, and the offering up of water to ancestors, with the reading of a portion of the Vedas, are very generally observed. Many content themselves with applying consecrated ashes to the person, or with imprinting on the forehead and other parts of the body the marks of their sect,—with the offering of flowers and water to the deity whom they regard as supreme, Vishnoo or Siva, and the repetition of his name as their divine guardian. Persons in business rarely do more than form the sectarial marks, with invocation and the uplifting of the hands to the invisible object of their worship. The banks of a sacred river, a portico in a temple, or the margin of a tank, are favourite places for religious exercises; and on beholding the crowds that assemble on the beautiful ghats of the rivers, we are reminded that in India, as in Mohammedan countries and under the Mosaic economy, religion and cleanliness go hand-in-hand, and sanitary requirements are invested with the force of a divine law. The mystic syllable OM—so sacred that no Soodra dare repeat it—name of deity, and which is prefixed to all prayers and many of the writings of the Hindoos, is of special and frequent repetition in the morning ritual of the Brahmin. And the most sacred and efficacious of his prayers is the *Gayatri*, the holiest text in the Vedas, which says, "Let us meditate on the supreme splendour of the divine Sun, that he may illuminate our understandings." The deity is regarded as the great spiritual Sun of the Universe, who supports and

enlightens every one who comes into the world. Perhaps the rite most characteristic of India and Brahminism is the morning adoration of the sun, where the worship has regard both to the orb itself and to the great Being which it symbolises. While the day is yet young, you may see the Brahmin standing on one foot, resting the other on his thigh, and holding in his hands a cup containing a lighted wick floating in clarified butter; while his calm intelligent adoring face is turned upwards to the east, as he repeats inaudibly an ascription of praise to the resplendent fount of light. An oblation, consisting of flowers, barley, water, &c., in a boat-shaped vessel, is then presented by being placed on his head,—the worshipper the while repeating holy texts, and saluting the mighty luminary as the cause of day, the foe of darkness, and the destroyer of every sin. He then walks towards the south, in imitation of the sun's course, and so terminates his morning's devotions.

As may be presumed, in a country where there are so many deities to worship, and where ritualism is so esteemed, the number of holidays is excessive. In this, religion merely gives effect to the national temperament; for the Hindoo is a dreamy unenergetic being, and he willingly accepts as divine any injunction to shut his shop or quit his labour, and repair for pleasure and sight-seeing to the festivals of the temple. For, as we have said, whatever be the nature of the festival, it is always flocked to with eagerness. All the Hindoos' holy days are holidays. And so numerous are they, that at one time the British found it difficult to get the natives in their employment to give their services for more than two hundred days in the year. It was an indolent pleasure-seeking, however, rather than the exactions of their religion, which made so many blank days in the working year; and a Government inquiry into the subject, and subsequent threat of dismissal, enabled the Hindoo officials materially to curb their passion for devotional exercises. From seventy or eighty, the "red-letter days" have now fallen to less than twenty; the great *poojas*

("worships") are limited to two or three; and it is only upon the occasion of the Doorga festival—called the Dusserah, in western India—that several days of entire absence from public duties are permitted. Religious pilgrimages are much in vogue among the Hindoos. Besides the ordinary festivals observed in most of the temples, to which all the pious of the adjoining districts flock, there are special festivals at particular places—such as the great festivals at Ramisseram, held at intervals of twelve and sixty years respectively—to which pious Hindoos flock from a great distance. Attendance at the car-festival at Juggernaut is thought to emancipate the soul at death from the evils of future birth. Sacred spots and places are likewise made the object of pilgrimage. Such is Hurdwar, where the Ganges emerges from the Himalaya into the plains,—such are the holy cities of Benares and Allahabad,—such also is the spot in southern India where Sita, the consort of Rama, went through the ordeal of fire to test her conjugal purity. At this latter spot multitudes flock together from every part of India, on the auspicious occasions, to bathe in the sea, in the full belief of attaining special favour from heaven. There is a temple at Gungotri, far up in the Himalayas, to which pilgrims resort, though they find there no other shelter than a few wooden sheds, and caves in the adjoining cliffs. Kedernath, in the same snowy locality, is also visited by pilgrims; and here a score of devotees annually sacrifice their lives, either by precipitating themselves from a certain precipice, or by proceeding into the snowy mountain-wastes until they perish from cold and hunger. Still higher in the mountains, and consequently deserted for half the year, is another goal of pilgrimage, the lonely temple of Badrinath,—standing with its glittering gilded spire and balls amidst the snows, with the icy peaks of Roodroo Himala towering above it to the height of twenty-three thousand feet. The annual number of pilgrims to this shrine is about fifteen thousand; and every twelfth year, when the Kumbh Mela is celebrated there, the number rises to fifty

thousand. Adoration of the idol, liberal fees to the attendant Brahmins, and ablution in a thermal spring formed into a bath, in which both sexes bathe indiscriminately, are believed to be efficacious in cleansing from past offences. The officiating priests are Brahmins from the Deccan, of which caste there are no women at Badrinath, so that they cannot marry; but, like not a few priestly celibats, they are a very profligate set. The great object of all Hindoo pilgrimages is to obtain purification from past sins, and exemption in the future life from transmigration. These pilgrimages often occupy months in the performance, and to meet their expenses the Hindoo sometimes borrows money at high interest, pledges his jewels, &c., and becomes impoverished for life. Thousands never return, perishing by the way, and leaving their bodies to be devoured by the vulture and the jackal. But their fate deters no one,—so great is the glory of those who return in safety. Shaving all the hair off their heads and bodies, and rubbing themselves with holy ashes, the returned pilgrim-devotees march stark-naked through the town, accompanied by flags and music, and followed by crowds of admiring young people of both sexes, who offer to them incense and presents, say prayers to them, and regard them as superior beings. To the Hindoos, it has been truly said, Immortality is not so much a belief as a *certainty*. In consequence, the present life appears a smaller thing to them than to any people in the world: and what is it to risk the fleeting breath of earthly life in pilgrimages, when the spiritual recompense is believed to be so great, and when the personal ovation upon return is so excessively flattering and full of worldly advantage?

Next to its asceticism, the external feature of the Hindoo religion which most startles and shocks a European is its lasciviousness. Greek mythology is certainly not very pure, but its amorous tales of the gods of Olympus appear refined when compared with the wanton mythology of the Hindoo Pantheon. Krishna and the Shepherdesses might have figured in the lax

but graceful myths of the Hellenic race; but there is an abundance of such gross pruriency in the popular sacred tales of the Hindoos as never has been paralleled elsewhere. These legends, among others, form the subject of the sculptures with which most of the Indian temples are covered from head to foot; and the priests often chant or recite them during the processions of the idols and the great car-festivals. In truth—as might be inferred from this state of matters—the Indian mind regards the passion of sex from a point of view the very opposite of that adopted by the British conquerors. It is not merely a difference of conventionality. It is not merely that amongst a people wearing the scantiest clothing, the notions of propriety must be widely different from those of a northern race who go buttoned or mantled up to the throat. When that is all the difference, we must beware of forming harsh and absurd judgments,—as if the rule of righteousness for all humanity was to be circumscribed by the climatic conditions and social usage of any one particular country. Yet the generality of mankind judge in this way; and hence the Indo-Mohammedan is as much shocked by the frank relationship which exists between the sexes in the British race, as the latter are at witnessing the indecent sculptures and recitations not infrequent in India. The Mohammedan, who shuts up his own women, and who never lets them out unless carefully guarded and veiled up to the eyes, thinks all Englishwomen "no better than they should be," when he sees their outdoor habits and frank intercourse with the male sex; and as for low gowns and bare arms, not to speak of the waltz and polka, a Mussulman regards them as signs of most unblushing profligacy. Such is conventionality. But there is far more than a conventional difference between our views and those of the Hindoos upon this subject. They see nothing wrong or strange in their sculptured or other displays of the sexual passion. They simply regard that passion as they would any other great fact or law of Nature. And the most convincing proof of this is

the manner in which it is connected with their religion. Forgetting analogous customs amongst the ancient Assyrians and other nations, we stand aghast to find that the dancing-girls of the temples, called the "daughters of the idol," are the prostitutes of India. Such is the case. But we are all better at denouncing our neighbours' sins than confessing our own; and truly it is a humiliating thought that, in Christian Europe, and especially in our own country, there are myriads of females living in what we scruple not to call the most degraded form in which sexual profligacy appears anywhere in the world—that of mercenary promiscuous concubinage; and with this great difference, that most of these unfortunates in our country are convinced that their profession is sinful, degrading, whereas the same class in India regard it in no such light.

These extraordinary ideas and social usages can only be explained by reference to the joint influence of polytheism and CASTE. India is truly a land of marvels, but the greatest wonder of all is the gigantic system of social subdivision and exclusiveness, by which the national unity has been fractured, individual action fettered, and community of feeling rendered impossible. Rich and poor, noble and *roturier*, in all countries have been chary of intermingling; but nowhere can be found anything in the least degree parallel to the system of caste as it exists in India. Its ramifications spread over the whole country; no one is too great or too small not to be embraced by its fetters. It seems a national monomania—for even the Pariahs, or outcasts, have instituted castes for themselves! In origin and essence, caste is not a religious but a social usage; nevertheless, for thirty centuries its social character has been lost sight of in the religious character which has been superimposed upon it. When they settled in India as conquerors, the Hindoos, like most ancient nations, consisted of three well-defined classes — priests, warriors, and the industrial class; while below them spread the conquered Soodra race, whom they regarded much as the Frankish barons of the middle ages

regarded the vilains or serfs of the countries which they entered as lords. As it was convenient for the dominant Hindoos, and especially for the priestly class, to perpetuate and intensify this social gradus, in due time the Brahmins, by wresting texts and inventing fables, succeeded in giving to this classification a sanction expressly divine. Brahma, they feigned, created four distinct kinds of men : first, the Brahmins, who came from his mouth ; second, the military class, who emanated from his arms ; third, the agricultural and mercantile classes, who originated from his body ; and fourth, the labouring classes, who were produced from his feet. All history is full of examples of such procedure. In a certain stage of society, wherever any social usage or distinction is found to work well for the dominant or priestly class, an effort is always made (sometimes in perfect good faith) to procure for it a divine authority, and so put the usage or principle beyond the reach of cavil and opinion : just as the divine right of kings, the infallibility of the Pope, the celibacy of the Romish priesthood, &c., are points or principles which the greater part of enlightened Europe still believes to be founded on the Scriptures, and thus enjoined by God himself. The first divisions of caste established in India were wide and simple, and, though tyrannical towards the Soodras or conquered people, not very fettering. But in the thirty centuries which have elapsed since then, the system has increased most fatally in its complexity,—and this in circumstances which might have been expected to produce a different result, and which consequently prove that the system finds some strong echo in the Hindoo character. Two of the original castes, the second and third, have almost disappeared ; and for all practical purposes the entire Hindoo race might now be divided into the two great castes of Brahmins and Soodras. Whence, then, the complexity? The caste of the Brahmins, although now comprising about forty modifications, in some respects preserves its unity ; but the Soodras have split up into an endless number of subdivisions, each of

which considers itself, and is considered by the others, quite as divinely sanctioned as were the original castes. The preservation of caste by each and all of these manifold subdivisions of the population, is now the most practical point in the Hindoo religion. It is true that the religious character of caste is a mere fiction,—but the Hindoo does not so regard it; and a Roman Catholic may as soon be argued out of his belief in the infallibility of the Pope, or of the divine sanction for priestly celibacy, as the Hindoo be convined that caste is of merely human origin, and therefore to be maintained or rejected according to the dictates of his own reason or choice. Moral guilt has no effect in producing loss of caste; but each caste is fettered by rules of the most absurd kind, any transgression of which makes a man an outcast, and is esteemed a more heinous crime than even murder.

Like other usages of Indian life, the prescriptions of caste are modified by locality. To the Brahmins all animal food, except that of fishes and kids, is forbidden; yet in some districts they will eat the flesh of any animal, if only (as is the case with all Hindoos) it is not killed with their own hands. In southern India, too, they partake, without scruple, of spirituous liquors, although these are in general only allowed to Pariahs. Hindoos consider themselves defiled by contact with feathers; but among the tribes at the foot of the Himalayas, who are in other respects strict Hindoos, this prejudice does not exist. Where every little class is resolved to hedge itself in by particular distinctions, many of these distictions must be of the most arbitrary and trivial character. Many castes are only to be known from one another by the cut and colour of their clothes, the shape and arrangement of their trinkets, or some other equally frivolous and unimportont distinction. The Rajpoots, and many other castes, eat mutton, venison, and fish; while beef, pork, and fowls, are held by them in abomination; but with some castes pork is the favourite diet, and beef only is prohibited. "The Rohillas will submit to be flogged

within an inch of their lives with a leathern martingale, but to be struck with a whip or cane would be an indelible disgrace, and very likely to be resented with a bullet or a stab. Coolies will carry any load, however offensive, upon their heads; bid them carry a man for a few paces, and, though it be a matter of life and death, they will answer you that it is the business of another caste."*

As further specimens of the absurd and vexatious character of caste regulations, take the following:—"A native carpenter must not use grease to his saw; a native smith must only work with his body in a particular position; a native sawyer must only cut wood according to a certain fashion; they must only eat a particular kind of food, cooked in a particular manner and at a particular time, and in a particular kind of vessel; the lowest-caste man will not allow another of his fellows to see him eat; no man will drink even water out of another's vessel, and every one carries about with him his own little brass pot. No stranger must cross the threshold of his little hut for fear of defiling it, and low-caste men must not approach nearer than a certain number of paces to persons of higher caste; his miserable garments must be worn only in a particular manner; he will not take a morsel of any kind of refreshment from a person of a different creed, even if ever so destitute; he will not allow a man of inferior caste to take water from the same well as himself. If of high caste, he will never drink water from a public pump or fountain; he will not touch a dead body, or the bone of an animal; he will not allow salt, or vinegar, or any kind of spirit, to enter his mouth; neither will he eat anything that has life. In many places whole villages are set apart for particular castes, and no stranger is allowed even to walk into the village, if they can prevent him. If he meets with any accident, he cannot go to the European hospitals, nor allow a European doctor to enter his house. He must not enter a new workshop, nor even a

* See IRVING, *On Caste*.

new shed, nor use a new tool, without the performance of a ceremony, such as sacrificing a black sheep, and smearing its blood upon all around." *

Caste is the great incubus upon India. It is the most serious barrier to the inroad of new ideas, and the inauguration of a better state of society. Caste, such as it now prevails, could only have grown up in a country where the means of locomotion were rare, and where tribal diversities of race fostered the spirit of isolation. The spread of railways, the growth of free thinking, and increased intercommunion, which are marking the British rule, must in the end prove subversive of this pernicious and most obstructive system. Probably a perception of this truth had no small influence in inciting the Brahmins, who benefit most by the principle of caste, to the late Revolt, as the only means of averting the subversion of their social status and privileges. But this revolt, by directing special attention to the subject of caste, cannot fail to accelerate its overthrow. It is the greatest obstacle which European civilisation encounters in India, and it will be a happy day for the Hindoos themselves when they abandon it. But how to proceed against it is, we confess, a difficult and serious question; for every part of the system is regarded as equally divine, and myriads of the Hindoos would perish rather than violate it.

The Indian peninsula is a huge *cul-de-sac*, into which race after race, or at least tribe after tribe, has poured in succession from immemorial times, without the possibility of any egression. None of these peoples appear to have wholly perished. And so they remain, in widely different proportions, whether as regards numbers or influence, imparting to the population of India a tesselated character,—or rather the appearance of a mosaic, in which analogous colours are grouped together, and from which time has in some places effaced the sharp outlines. These racial diversities are reflected in the character of the religion, which, as we have seen, varies from region to region,

* Correspondent of *Daily News*, Nov. 1857.

both in spirit and in externals. And if we examine these religious phases, we will find that Hindooism becomes grosser and more overlaid, or indeed identified, with externalism and extravagance, as we approach the south; while, conversely, as we proceed northwards from Cape Comorin to Calcutta, and thence north-westwards to the Affghan mountains, we find externalism diminishing, and the creed growing purer—(the Vindhyan chain forming a dark belt across the middle, in which, though there be little pomp or ritual, there is much blood). In accordance with this gradus, further to the north-west than the Brahminical nation, we find a kindred but later-arrived people, the Jats, who form the flower of the confederated tribes who profess the Sikh religion,—a faith which is by far the purest and freest from the burden of forms and ritual of any in India. It is only four centuries old—a mere infant of days compared to that theological and chronological medley, existing Hindooism. It was originally a pure deism, inculcating the widest charity and a pure morality; but it has degenerated in so far that the Sikhs now consider their founder, Nanak, as a mediator with God, and entitled to divine honours. They agree with their fellow Hindoos in believing in the transmigration of souls, either as a punishment or as a means of moral purification, and in regarding it as a horrible impiety to kill kine. But Nanak, like Buddha, was a strong protester against the system of caste, which is repudiated by the Sikhs—a circumstance which proved of the greatest service to us during the terrible crisis of the Sepoy revolt, throughout which the Sikh regiments as a body remained faithful amidst the universal defection of their Hindoo comrades. We may add that the rise of the pure creed of Nanak, in defiance of the religious monstrosities and social absurdities of Hindooism, gives a cheering hope of what, in course of time, may yet be accomplished in Hindostan by the preaching of Christianity.

Still farther to the north-west we find the Patans, immigrants from the Affghan mountains, the latest wave of population

(except the British) that has forced its way into the Indian territories, who line the banks of the Indus, permeate the Punjab, and form the bulk of the population in the region around Mooltan. Other waves of Mohammedan immigration—Arab and Mongol—preceded them, commencing soon after the Hejira, and assuming formidable proportions in the eleventh century, when Mahmoud of Ghuznee led the way into the golden realms of Hindostan. From that time down to the period of the British conquest, Mohammedanism was the religion of the sovereigns of India; and at various times efforts were made to convert the Hindoos to that faith at the point of the sword. Partly owing to this compulsion, and partly from motives of worldly advancement, a considerable body of the native population became Mohammedans, so that a large proportion of the Mussulmans of India are in no way related to the Mussulman conquerors of that country, but are pure Hindoos, descended from ancestors who embraced the foreign faith. But religion, like everything else, varies in complexion with the country and people amidst which it is established. Christianity in the British Isles wears a different look from what it does in Italy. Spain and Germany are hardly less diverse in their respective phases of the same faith; and in France and Russia Christianity notably differs in complexion. Plant the identically same creed in different countries or peoples, and the result will be different in each. This is the case with Mohammedanism in India. The worshippers of Allah in that country are different from their co-religionists in other parts of the world. They are *Indo*-Mohammedans, and the practice of their faith is tinged with the peculiarities of the Indian race. It is the least stern and the most pomp-loving of all the forms of Mohammedanism; and the grave solemn Turk would turn with anger and contempt from the "vain shows" in which his co-religionist indulges on the banks of the Ganges, and much more on those of the Cauvery and Kistna. If, for illustration's sake, we were to liken the grave Soonnee form of Mohammedanism, followed by the Turks and western Asiatics, to the Protest-

antism of Christendom, then the Sheite faith of Persia, with its greater love of show and externalism, would find a parallel in the Catholic Church ; while Indo-Mohammedanism, with its still greater leaning to show and superstition, may be likened to that Oriental form of Christianity which is embodied in the Greek Church. The great festival of the Mohurrum, though a fast of the most mournful kind, is in India accompanied by so much pomp and splendour, that strangers might be at a loss to distinguish it from an occasion of pure rejoicing; while in their Hindoo-like reverence for the Imaums, Hossein and Houssein, the Indo-Mohammedans have introduced rites and ceremonies savouring of idolatry, or actual worship of these sons of Ali. Of the out-door celebration of the Mohurrum at Madras, Mr Bruce says that "the entertainments were quite at variance with the idea of a lamentation." In truth, we find Mohammedanism in India exhibiting the same notable and highly suggestive phases as Hindooism : to wit, varying in the complexion of its ritual in different localities,—comparatively pure and grave towards the north-west, and becoming full of pageant and gaiety as we approach the southern extremity of the peninsula. Mohammedanism never made much way beyond the limits of Hindostan ; and its religious buildings, even in northern India, if we except the Jumma Musjid at Delhi, cannot vie with those of the natives. And yet some of the finest mosques were erected on the site and out of the materials of demolished Hindoo temples,—the mosques of Aûrungzebe at Muttra and Benares being illustrations of this common practice. As it is only Indo-Mohammedanism with which we have to do, we pass over the religious beliefs and practices of that faith, except as they are modified by the influences of the Indian clime. The festivals of the Mohurrum and the Buckra-Eed, therefore, we leave undescribed ; but the festival of the Bhearer calls for a word in passing, as both in origin and character it belongs to India. It is an annual festival, held at night ; and the scene which is exhibited during its celebration is sometimes very striking. The

banks of the Ganges are brilliantly lighted up; and, accompanied and announced by numerous flights of rockets, a floating palace, built on a raft, comes sailing down the stream, preceded by thousands of small lamps, each wreathed with a chaplet of flowers, which cover with gay brilliance the surface of the flashing water. The raft, which is formed of plantain-trees fastened together, is of considerable extent; and the structure which it bears is such as Titania herself might delight to inhabit. Towers, gates, and pagodas rise in fantastic array, bright with a thousand colours, and shining in the light of numberless glittering cressets. And so the fairy-like spectacle moves on, while admiring crowds throng the banks of the river. The Hindoos, we may add, never object, and generally delight, to join in the festivals of their Mohammedan brethren—indeed the festivals of the latter owe very much of their eclat to the presence and co-operation of the Hindoo population, who are almost as ready to salaam the tazias of Hossein and Houssein as to bow before the images of Siva and Vishnoo.

The last religious sect we require to notice in modern India are the Parsees—descendants of the ancient Fire-worshippers of Persia, who, though exiled for ten centuries from their native land, still maintain the faith of Zoroaster after it has vanished from the region of its origin. They form an important portion of the population of Bombay and Surat, and are as much distinguished from the natives of India by their personal traits as by their religious rites and ceremonies. All that we need to note of them here is the reverence which they pay to fire (*inter alia*, regarding as a heinous sin and defilement of the sacred element to blow it with the breath), and the peculiar mode in which they treat the bodies of the dead. The Parsees believe in the Resurrection, a final Judgment, and a future state of rewards and punishments; but they evidently do not hold that the resurrection is to be made in the actual body which the soul has worn in this life, but in an etherealised form of it, or, as St Paul says, a "spiritual" body. Their reverence follows the soul and not

the flesh; and hence the corpse is disregarded by the survivor, having been abandoned by its own life or spiritual tenant. The dead bodies of the Parsees are not consumed by fire, according to the custom of the Hindoos, nor interred according to the practice of the Mohammedans, Christians, and Chinese. They hold burial, cremation, or the confiding of the ashes or corpse to the waters, to be a sacrilege against the elements; and they have cemeteries situated at a distance from any inhabited spot —such as the one on Malabar Hill, at Bombay—whither the corpses are conveyed and exposed on iron gratings, where they are soon devoured by vultures, kites, and other carnivorous birds. This singular practice was followed by the ancient Parthians, Bactrians, and cognate tribes, amongst whom, says Justin, "burial was effected by dogs and birds;" and in Tartary, at the present day, says Huc, "the true nomadic tribes convey the dead to the tops of hills, or bottoms of ravines, there to be devoured by the birds and beasts of prey." This practice, and the creed or ideas upon which it rests, we may remark, are the very antipodes of those prevailing in ancient Egypt, where every effort was made to preserve the soulless corpse, in the belief that the spirit would return at some far distant time to reinhabit its old earthly tabernacle.

We do not wonder, then, that John Bull is puzzled with India. That peninsular *cul-de-sac* of Asia—that vast Italy of the East—is the greatest puzzle in the world to those who examine it. It is so full of variety and contradictions. Its religious creeds, especially, are alternately the laughing-stock and the admiration of European philosophers,—a mass of absurdities or a fountain of light. All depends on what part is looked at. We are too apt to pick up a fragment, and judge as if that fragment were the vast whole. Every country, alike in its life and in its literature, exhibits many diversities of religious belief. Even in our own islands, where the various parts of the population are as thoroughly fused as anywhere in the

world, how many diversities, even opposites, may be found side by side! The Calvinist, with his bald ritual, rigidity of creed, and Christian fatalism, — the Romanist, with his pompous ceremonial, superstitious dogmas, and idol-worship,—the Positivist, who believes in no Church—and the Universalist, who believes in all,—may be found mingling in the same circles; while Mormonism finds converts in the ruder districts; and a practical belief in sorcery, witchcraft, spirit-rapping, and the "black arts" generally, is very far from being extinct either in our upper or lower classes. Wherever there are diversities of temperament or gradations of intellect, there will be corresponding diversities and gradations of religious belief—gross and materialistic in the ignorant, spiritual in the enlightened; narrow and bigoted, or tolerant and mild; some in which the moving power is Fear, others in which it is Love. Such diversities are manifested in the life or literature of almost every nation, however homogeneous. But in India such diversity is enhanced to an unusual degree by the unparalleled mixture of races that has occurred within its sea-and-mountain-girdled area. From the remotest times there has been a ceaseless march of tribes into that vast peninsula from which there is no outlet. Pouring across the Indus, or straggling down through the passes of the Himalaya, each wave of incomers pushed its predecessors farther into the country. The later the settlers, the more powerful,—the earlier, the more ignorant and weak. And thus it happened, in this hurtling of race upon race, that some of the earliest almost or entirely disappeared, and others of them were forced into the hills and woody fastnesses of the land; while the better organised peoples of the second great wave of immigration maintained their existence, but took on in part the civilisation of the still superior Aryan nations who followed in turn—at the same time reacting powerfully on the creeds and usages of that gifted dominant race.

Geology shows that the crust of the earth consists of various layers or strata, all formed out of the same elementary substance,

but each presenting different aspects and qualities, according to the time of its formation and the influences to which it has been subjected,—which strata coexist and intermingle, each predominant in certain localities, and often with some of the others cropping through it. The human population of the globe exhibits similar strata, and with diversities quite as marked as any in the geological world. The gigantic clumsy copper-coloured Patagonian differs from the rather short square-built yellow-faced Chinese, and the black pigmy root-eating Bushman of Africa differs from the white-skinned highly-developed Englishman, as widely and more obviously than do the strata of dead rock from one another; although, owing to their migratory power and capacity for fusion, the races of mankind sometimes pass into one another by gradations more subtle and less easily defined than those which distinguish the inorganic world.

Nowhere are those human strata (if we may so speak) more observable than in the Indian peninsula. There, various remnants of the rude earliest races are seen surrounded by the more numerous after-comers, just as the bald bleak peaks of the primary rocks stand out here and there amidst the wide expanse of more recent formations. These barbarous races are to be found chiefly in the hill-regions and woody fastnesses of the peninsula; also, in lesser degree, in quarters where the configuration of the country is such, that the earliest tribes were hemmed in, without possibility of further retreat, between the later-comers and the sea,—in which latter localities they may no longer appear separate and distinct, but only as a leaven of darker colour and ruder civilisation in the general population. The immense level region of Hindostan, the vast plains constituting the basins of the Indus and Ganges, offered no places of refuge from the waves of invasion; hence, with the exception of some who were shut up and absorbed into the population of Lower Bengal, not only did the Tamul and other kindred peoples, forming the second great wave of immigration,

sweep the earliest races southwards into the hills of central and southern India, but the Tamulese and Canarese themselves were forced to migrate in the same direction before the strong flood of the Brahminical invasion.

From the latitude of the Vindhya chain down to Cape Comorin and the forests of Ceylon, the rude aboriginal* or first-come population of India are still to be met with in detached communities, barbarous, and quite distinct in customs and manners from the general population. Many of them are quite distinct also from one another, evidently belonging to different eras of an indefinitely remote and abysmal past. Like scattered islets, relics of a primeval world, appear the uplands, tenanted by those aboriginal tribes. Hardly do we cross the lower Indus than we come upon one of those relics of a prehistoric past in the tall and athletic black Koolies of Guzerat —the remains of some early tribe pushed southwards into this corner, where the sea prevented further flight, and where the locality allowed of their remaining distinct from the surrounding population. The broad wooded and jungly belt of the Vindhya Hills, extending eastwards from Guzerat across the peninsula to the Bay of Bengal, with offshoot ridges running far up into Central India, is still for the most part in possession of aboriginal tribes. Scattered over the rugged ridges in Malwa, we find the black short Bheels, with thick rugged hair and beards, who (unlike the Hindoos) readily eat flesh, even of cows, and are very fond of intoxicating drinks. They are the most numerous of the aboriginal tribes, and at Neemuch the Rajpoots virtually acknowledge that many of the cities and fortresses were founded by Bheel chiefs; but it is long since they were driven south by the Rajpoots into their present

* It is convenient at times to follow common parlance in the use of the word "aborigines;" but we must say that the furthest research into the past throws no light upon a really aboriginal race. When the curtain of history rises upon the world, we see no people which has not already changed, or that is not in process of changing, its quarters. "Aboriginal" may correctly mean "from the beginning of history,"—but nothing more.

quarters, where they lead a savage life apart as freebooters, or else live amongst their conquerors as cultivators and village watchmen. The same race are found in Guzerat, and also in Candeish. South of the Nerbudda, and almost in the heart of the Vindhya chain, we come to Gondwana, where, amidst almost inaccessible forests and rocky ravines, we find another of those early and now outcast tribes—the Gonds. Jet-black, short, thick-lipped, with small deep-set eyes, they live in miserable huts, surrounded by their swine and poultry, and sometimes buffaloes. They pay no reverence to Brahmins—have no priesthood—and the little religion which they have seemingly consists in a worship of demons, to whom they are reported to sacrifice children. The vast hilly province of Orissa, verging on Gondwana and comprising the eastern portion of the Vindhya chain, contains no less than three different tribes of rude aborigines,—the Khonds, the Koles, and the Sourahs. Human sacrifices prevail amongst them also. The religion of the Khonds is somewhat remarkable. They regard the Earth-Spirit as in rebellion against the Supreme Deity, and as needing to be propitiated by mankind as the most potent influencer of their lot. And as, like all peoples who are unacquainted with astronomy, the Earth is to the Khonds the universe, we have here the dogma, so widely acknowledged or implied elsewhere, of Creation at feud with the Creator—the doctrine of Satan opposed to God: but, at utter variance with the Christian's form of the same creed, this barbarous people direct their worship, not to the Supreme, but to the rebel Earth-Spirit, their "prince of this world," and seek to propitiate her by human sacrifices. Farther south, in the very apex of India, among the hill-districts of southern Madras, we find other, and for the most part gentler tribes, belonging to an equally or still more remote past. The Tudas of the Nilgherry hills, indeed, although living uncivilised and in complete isolation, may be fancied a later intruding tribe, they are so superior in mental and bodily organisation to the (other?)

earliest tribes,—an idea which obtains countenance from the fact that the Cholas and other Nilgherry tribes look to them as lords and superiors. They are described as a noble race,—tall and athletic,—with symmetric features, half-way between the Roman and Jewish in type,—large-eyed, and with long fine hair falling in natural locks. The comparatively treeless character of the hills where they dwell, appears to indicate that in former times large spaces had been cleared for agriculture. In the same quarter—in the Dendigal and neighbouring Wynaad hills—we find humanity in the lowest and least developed form which is to be met with in India. The Shanars, Kurumbas, and other wild tribes in this region, are apparently the oldest of all, and probably tenanted Southern India at a time when the Bheels and Gonds still roved as masters over the then forest-covered plains of Hindostan. They are most poor and miserable. Some of them are clothed, when clothed at all, with the bark of a tree,—using bows and arrows, and living chiefly on roots, honey, and reptiles. They are very short in stature, agile as monkeys, penetrate the jungles with marvellous ease, without habitations, and frequently living in trees. Is it not most likely that these wild tribes, once spread extensively through the forests of the country, were the "monkey race" whom the first Aryan invaders of the Deccan met with, and who figure in the old Indian poems as the allies of Rama in his conquest of Ceylon?

Around those isolated relics of aboriginal population—so diverse from one another that they may be likened to a broken chain of vari-coloured islets—flows a wide sea of the secondary races. These appear homogeneous compared to the diversity which marks the aboriginal tribes; but in reality they are distinguishable into several marked divisions. As the Tamul, Telinga, and Canarese nations, they people the whole peninsular portion of India, from Hindostan to the sea. They are civilised and organised in society — therein being as vastly superior to the aboriginal tribes as the organic world of matter

is to the inorganic. Between them and the still later-come Aryan races the distinction is infinitely less, and a partial amalgamation and complete intermingling has taken place between them; yet a difference is plainly perceptible both in physical and mental aspect when the two populations are compared in the mass. The original diversity between them and the Aryan or Sanskrit-speaking race of Hindostan is further evidenced by the fact that there are still current in Southern India several languages which, although largely intermixed with Sanskrit terms in consequence of Aryan conquest and civilisation, nevertheless belong to distinct families of language. The chief of these are the Tamul, Telinga, and Karnatic, each of which implies the former existence as separate nations of the people who speak those dialects. Indeed the Tamul language has a literature of its own, which shows that the Tamul race had achieved an advanced civilisation, independent of (and perhaps before the invasion of) the Sanskrit-speaking Hindoos. The Mahrattas, whose chief seat is in the Deccan, although their power extends far into the plains of Hindostan, likewise appear to belong to those secondary races, rather than to the tertiary or Aryan wave of northern immigration,—although the proximity of the Mahrattas to Hindostan has produced in them a somewhat larger infusion of Aryan blood than is to be found farther south.

Fancy the Tamul and other nations of the secondary wave of immigration, interspersed with savage tribes of still more ancient settlement, in possession of the vast plains of the Ganges and Central India, and spreading southward over the Deccan towards Southern India—the rude aboriginal tribes predominating the farther south we go,—then we shall have a pretty accurate picture of India at the time when the Aryan or Sanskrit-speaking race appeared on the scene. The foremost division of this great race was the Brahminical nation, which led the van of the migration, and whose intellectual superiority still entitles them to rank highest amongst the cog-

nate nations which followed and now live side by side with them. Settling along the line of the Ganges, from Hurdwar down to the eastern frontier of Oude and the Rajmal hills, we see them occupying the great cities of Hastinapura, Indraprastha (Delhi), and Canouge in the Doab—and Ayodhya (Oude), Benares, and Palibothra (Patna), farther down the valley—they concentrated more and more to the east, especially in Oude, as new immigrating tribes arrived in the upper part of the Gangetic valley ; but they never passed forward in mass into Lower Bengal,—which region continued to be peopled by earlier tribes, of the secondary wave of immigration, and (as may be seen at this day) far inferior both in physical and mental qualities to the population of Upper India or Hindostan. The Kshatriyas, or warrior-caste, of Manu—who by-and-by usurped the ruling power in the State, previously held by the Brahmins—appear to have been a small band of king-like warriors, identical in extraction with the Brahminical nation, and by dint of arms and prestige becoming kings, and furnishing a royal race to the many small States into which the country was divided. In fact, the early Aryans in the valley of the Ganges quite resembled the Hellenic race in Greece, in being split up into a number of small States or citydoms, with a servile substratum of earlier population ; and the Kshatriyas (though originating in a profession, not in a single family) may be likened to the Heraclidæ, who became a royal race to the Peloponnesus. Like the Heraclidæ, the Kshatriyas by-and-by declined and disappeared,—the less distinguished remains of this race being probably absorbed into the numerous and warlike Rajpoot nation, which next arrived from beyond the Indus, and served themselves heirs to the kinghood and warrior-profession of the Kshatriyas. The Rajpoots, who arrived on the Ganges long after the Code of Manu, and probably about the era of Alexander's invasion of the Punjab, freely interlaced with their Brahminical kindred ; but while the Brahmins congregated chiefly in Oude and the adjoining region to the south, the Raj-

poots settled chiefly in Rohilcund, the middle Doab, and Bundelcund. Thus the Bengalees, Brahmins, and Rajpoots formed three more or less distinct zones of population, stretching from the sea up to the head-waters of the Jumna and Ganges. Probably about the same time the Jats, a less distinguished branch of the Rajpoot family, approached the scene, settling on the rivers of the Punjaub, and completing the series of the Aryan immigrations. This dominant Aryan population did not confine itself to its first seats, but in course of time, overpassing the limits of Hindostan, spread into the Deccan and Southern India. The Brahmins led off the migration several centuries before Christ; and appear to have founded the *Pandya* kingdom in the south, named from the fair-skinned invaders. The Rajpoots in like manner, with their Jat followers, in due course moved into the same regions, where the *Meerassee* village-system (by which a certain body share the land, equals among themselves, but regarding all others as their servants) still bespeaks the presence of the republican tribes of Upper India, here settled as oligarchs amongst an inferior population.* The result of these migrations was an infusion of Aryan blood, and still more of Aryan civilisation, amongst the pre-Aryan peoples of Southern India; although the conquering and dominant immigrants kept themselves very much apart from the general population, alike by social and religious distinctions.

In these facts—in this unusual mingling of distinct races, we find the natural cause of the extraordinary caste-system of

* All races, however republican in practice at home, tend to develop this *Meerassee* system of tenure—this aristocracy of equality—when they settle as conquerors among another race. It is especially characteristic of the Indo-Teutonic nations, into whatever country they have entered as conquerors. The so-called democracy of Athens was in reality a republican aristocracy, resting upon a basis of slavery. In a more diffused, and consequently less intense form, so also were the Franks in Gaul,—a fact expressed for centuries in the distinction between *noble* and *roturier*, and which was only terminated by the French Revolution, when the expulsion of the noblesse was in reality a throwing-off of the stable Teutonic governing caste,—leaving the Government thereafter to the mobile impulses of a Celtic people.

India. Every dominant people contemns the inferior races with whom it comes in contact, and loves to preserve its own individuality. Caste exists everywhere *in fact* throughout the world. And the British race, who idolise liberty and equal rights at home, no sooner come into contact with the negroes in Central America than they adopt the principles of caste, just as their far-off relatives the Aryans have done for three thousand years in India. Caste existed *de facto* in India from the first mingling of the rival races. But soon the Brahmins, to guard the purity of their own high blood and to rivet or magnify their own dominancy, invented the laws of caste, and coined for them a divine authority. They supplied a natural want of that heterogeneous Indian society. Although the dominant race, the Aryan population itself was composed of separate tribes; and moreover, even in Hindostan, they were interlaced with fragments of alien tribes, who have left their leaven to the present day in the low-caste population of Upper India. Of the four great castes first enacted by Brahminical law, the three which pertained to the Aryans themselves—viz. Brahmins, Kshatriyas, and the Vaisyas, (the last comprising the common people of the Aryan race)—were not marked by any harsh distinctions; but the Sudra caste, into which the whole non-Aryan peoples were put, was kept apart by a wide gulf and a galling inferiority. Not that the Code of Manu, with its unparalleled arrogance and severity towards the Sudras, is to be accepted as a true representation of all Indian life. Whether as regards the character and privileges of the Brahmins, or the social bondage of the Sudras, the Code gives a picture rather of what a Brahmin wished to be, than of what he actually was. It is Indian society idealised by an upper-caste man. In Brahminical cities, doubtless, the condition of the Sudras or non-Aryans may have been nearly as servile as the Code enacts. But there were in certain parts entire Sudra communities: we read of Sudra kings and Sudra cities, in which cities Brahmins are exhorted not to dwell; and in these

communities the non-Aryans would still hold up their heads, and the distinctions of the Code would not be respected. We even read of Sudras being invited to the court of the Aryan king Yudhishthira, and treated with the same respect as the other guests and princes; and in the Brahmanas appended to the Vedas, we find them even allowed to be present at the sacrifices. The Sudras appear to have been a people located in towns in the valley of the Indus, and consequently one of the first subdued by the Aryan immigrants, who afterwards extended the name to all the settled (*i.e.*, non-barbarous) tribes of the country—in contrast to the Chandalas and other savage tribes.

The system of caste, thus originating in the natural condition of Indian society, when enforced by law and invested with a supposed divine authority, soon ramified all over the country. The Brahmins and Rajpoots carried it with them into Southern India; and partly by necessity, partly by the voluntary action of the people, the original castes, especially that of the Sudras, became split up into endless subdivisions. Adopted at first on natural grounds, as a means towards an end, caste was found susceptible of such wide application amidst the heterogeneous population of India, that it became as it were a fashion,—an institution to be adopted in all circumstances, even where no racial diversity existed. It became the grand law of Indian society—the prime point of social honour: so that (as usually happens in such circumstances all over the world), losing sight of the natural foundation for the usage, people came to fancy caste a thing desirable of itself, and quite indispensable in every well-ordered community. Accordingly, from diversities of race it by-and-by was extended to diversities of trade and profession. Every one piqued himself upon belonging to some caste. Tinkers, tailors, soldiers, sailors—robbers and murderers included—each man secluded himself within a brotherhood of his own. There was hope for every one, in time and in eternity, who could claim a caste, however low; nothing but perdition, both here

and hereafter, awaited him who had none. Even the outcasts —those who had fallen or been expelled from castehood— band themselves together in castes of their own. Castes of outcasts !—

"E'en in the lowest depths a lower still!"

So entirely divorced from its original and substantial cause did this usage become;—and to such extravagant and altogether hyperbolical lengths is it now carried by an unreflecting people, who, long centuries ago, made the very common mistake of exalting and glorifying the means as an all-important end!* Caste had its uses. Unlike the Spaniard in Mexico, who has sunk into a weak hybrid by coupling with the aborigines, the Brahminical invaders of India, by instituting caste, have preserved the purity and dominancy of their race. And this was good: for as the height of a crowd is just that of the tallest man in it, so, if the Aryan invaders had become diffused among the non-Aryan population, the hybrid race thence arising would never have originated so high a civilisation and philosophy as was accomplished under the kingly and saintly leadership of the Rajpoots and Brahmins. Better an aristocracy to rule and enlighten the masses, than a uniform inferior mass of mediocrity which can never rise above itself.

Even with the help of caste, the Aryans in India, as we shall

* "Caste," said Dr Duff, at a recent missionary meeting at Calcutta, "has, like a cedar, struck its roots deep into every crevice of the soil of Hindu nature—wound itself, like the ivy, round every stem and branch of Hindu intellect—and tinged, as with a scarlet dye, every feeling and emotion of the Hindu heart. It reaches to the unborn child. It directs the nursing of the infant. It shapes the training of youth—it regulates the actions of manhood—it settles the attributes of old age. It enters into and modifies every relationship of life—it moulds and gives complexion to every department of society. Food, and raiment, and exercise, and the very functions of nature, must obey its sovereign voice. With every personal habit, every domestic usage, every social custom, it is inseparably interwoven. From the cradle to the funeral pile, it sits like a presiding genius at the helm, guiding, directing, and determining every movement of the inner and outer man. Beyond the ashes of the funeral-pile, it follows the disembodied spirit to 'the world of shades,' and fixes its destiny there."

see, did not escape the influence of the inferior populations around them. But first let us behold them, in the childhood of their race, as they emerge from the northern mountains into the plains of the Indus. In the Vedas, one of the very oldest books in the world—older not only than Homer, but than the events which he sings — compiled almost as long ago as the Exodus, and many of its hymns written while the Israelites were still in bondage on the banks of the Nile, — we catch sight of this remarkable race emerging from its cradle, becoming vocal in literature, and so coming forth from the shadowy abysses of unrecorded primeval humanity into the Dawn ; thenceforth to have its history interwoven with that of the other sections of mankind, and to give its life and civilisation, its arts and science, its laws and philosophy, as an heirloom to the entire species. Grown restless on the elevated plains of Bactria, overpassing the snowy defiles of the lofty Hindoo-Koosh, and descending through cold and barren Affghanistan into the plains of the Indus, we seem to find them at first located on the eastern side of that river, chiefly in Sindh and Guzerat, and spread in independent detachments over the Punjab. They do not enter this new land of promise as the Hebrews entered Palestine, in a serried mass, organised as a whole, and homogeneous in everything ; but rather in detached wavelets, spreading at will over the country,—each more or less under leadership of its own, and not all conforming to the same religious ritual. Treeless as are the plains of the Punjab, Sirhind, and the lower valley of the Indus now, they were covered then with primeval forests ; and the bare and arid plains which British rule is endeavouring to reclothe, then waved with the perennial foliage of lofty woods, tenanted by wild beasts or by thinly-scattered aboriginal tribes. Like the Anglo-Saxons in Northern America, the Aryans sometimes fired the woods before them ; for their early hymns tell of dense forests, through which a path is cleared by the "fierce-blazing Agni (god of fire), who leaves behind a blackened track." "Breeze-excited and flame-

weaponed, Agni penetrates amongst the timber: Attacking the unexhaled moisture of the trees, he rushes triumphant like a bull: He traverses the woods, and shears the hairs of the earth: All are afraid of him as he flies along." Prince Bavya "dwells upon the banks of the Sindhu" or Indus; and the prominent notice given to horses in the hymns—where we read of "long-maned glossy-backed coursers," "prancing steeds, rapid as hawks," and where even the actions of the gods are likened at times to those of horses—indicates the location of the Aryans in the level plains of Sindh and Kattiwar, where the horse is a far superior animal to that found on the Ganges, which latter could never have furnished the illustrations of the Vedas. Or, probably, in their migration, they brought herds of horses with them from the great stud-bearing steppes of Upper Asia. But they were spreading also by the base of the Himalayas and Aravalli Hills; for we read of mountain-peaks seen shining afar — of caves and waterfalls, and "graceful spotted deer." And so they passed north-eastwards into Sirhind; other bands of kindred race doubtless passing thither more directly by the passes of the Khyber or Cashmere. They carry all before them, yet not unopposed; for in those old hymns we see them perpetually in dread of a race (or rather, we should say, many diverse tribes) unlike their own, whom they call robbers, spider-like, and black—who are not mere savages, for they have cities and kings—and who worship a goddess, "Nirriti, with unfriendly looks," whom even the bold Aryans regard with considerable fear and trembling. Nevertheless the gods of the Aryans prevail over those of their black adversaries; and we read how in due time Indra, the chief deity of the early Hindoos, after destroying or subduing the indigenous barbarians, bestowed the fields on his "white-complexioned friends."

If the Aryans do not speak much of their own cities, it is not because they were mere nomads when they entered India, but because they were a nation on the move. They had numerous flocks and herds, indeed but they also cultivated the

soil and laid it out into fields. They "measure the land with a rod"—they "plough the earth for barley," and they "bring home the produce of their fields in carts." They have towns, and practise many of the arts of civilised life. Weaving is an ordinary occupation, and furnishes the poetic imagination of the people with fine and effective similes. "Cares consume me," cries one, "as a rat gnaws a weaver's threads." "Night," says another, "envelopes the extended world like a woman weaving a garment;" and in another place day and night are likened to "two famous female weavers, interweaving their threads." They worked in iron, and also in gold; they forged armour and weapons of steel; they had chariots, and carts, and harness, many-oared boats, and jars of wine. Merchants are amongst them, "covetous of gain," and whose ships are said, in hyperbole, to "crowd the sea," although no foreign products appear to have been in use. Tradesmen—or shopmen, as they would be now—were already up to the tricks of trade; so that the god Indra is besought not to "take advantage" of his worshippers "like a dealer." They had not yet coined money, but gold was esteemed wealth, and doubtless was used as money by weight; and they used to keep their riches in a chest, or, as now, hide them in a hill or a well. Gambling, for which the natives of India have still a passion, was in vogue even then, and cowries were used as dice. We read of debts and debtors, and reverses of fortune,—and of course there are thieves. Medical science, though unarrayed in the pretentious complexity of modern times, was probably tolerably effective. At all events, they anticipated by more than three thousand years our hydropathic doctrine,—one of their maxims being that "all healing power is in the waters." They were also acquainted with the virtue of herbs; and one exclaims in prayer, "nourished by the sanitary herbs, may I live a hundred winters." Gold, horses, and bulls are given as presents, and golden rings and ear-rings are used as ornaments. Horses, indeed, appear to have been very plentiful; and "a hundred

vigorous steeds" is not an unusual gift from a prince to a holy man. Chiefs go on forays, have plenty of chariots, sometimes with golden wheels and yokes, and with golden trappings for their horses; and there are processions in which the chief at times has a thousand followers. Chariots and horsemen figure in war. Finally, as regards the female sex, their condition appears to have been free and natural. They are spoken of as "the light of the dwelling;" and some of the Vedic hymns are ascribed to female authors. The chiefs sometimes had a plurality of wives; these were splendidly attired, and rode in chariots; "ten chariots drawn by bay steeds carrying my wives," figure in a chief's procession; and we read also of female heroism, and of the wife of a chief accompanying him on a midnight foray. There were also eunuchs and courtesans; and the latter, as is still the case in India, were not regarded in a very disreputable light.

Such are fragmentary facts of their social existence, as we catch glimpses of it in the ancient hymns and prayers of the Vedas. But what of their religion at that early time? A species of Sun-worship—rather, we should say, a worship of Light, alike in its orbs and in its phenomena—came with them from their home-land beyond the mountains, afterwards to be spiritualised into a far nobler worship by the Brahmans on the Ganges. Can we wonder at the worship of Light by those early nations? Carry our thoughts back to their remote times, and our only wonder would be if they did not so adore it. The Sun is life as well as light to all that is on the earth,—as we of the present day know even better than they of old. Moving in dazzling radiance or brilliant-hued pageantry through the sky, scanning in calm royalty all that passes below, the solar orb seems the very god of this fair world, which lives and blooms but in his smile. The Seasons are the ebbing and flowing of Earth's life beneath the variance of his presence. All day he fills the eye and gladdens the heart; and when he withdraws, and night comes, all droops, existence stops, the world disappears. A

mysterious power then goes forth over the earth, causing all things to sink into a trance—a suspension of being. Sleep does not come upon man at night merely because his body is wearied, or because he can no more see to work, but because a drowsy spirit is then abroad, the very opposite of the exciting influence of the solar rays. Chemists cannot catch and analyse that influence, but it is there. Flowers fold up their petals—plants droop their leaves—and the life-spirit of man, folding in upon itself, withdraws from the surface, and centres in the brain and ganglia to rest and dream. The world, too, sinks out of sight: in the darkness it almost ceases to be. Fancy those primitive Aryans in their upland homes, where they counted time by winters, or journeying under tents in their new-found Indian clime. Theirs are none of those appliances by which modern science enables us to turn night into day: a fire smouldering lightless in its ashes is all that lingers with one through the darkness. If he wake up restless from his couch during the night, or rise before the dawn, what are the feelings and thoughts which fill his mind? The world is gone from him. Instead of the many-coloured earth and brilliant sky, blank darkness fills his eye, and from out the blackness things knock against him—objects which he cannot see, perhaps cannot comprehend—very ghosts of a dead world which once smiled around him. The natural or accidental sounds of night come upon him with weirdlike influence. Perhaps, too, he is cold, and shivers in the night-wind as he stands at the door of his hut. But lo! in the far east a beaming radiance streams up, from behind the black circuit of the horizon; sky reappears; and Earth begins to tremble into renewed being beneath the quivering light. A few minutes more, and the Sun, his god and benefactor of yesterday—ay, and of all the yesterdays of his life—shoots up grandly and in dazzling splendour into the sky. The uplands first leap into view, like islets of light above a sea of night: and down, down the heights comes the sunny tide of returning Day, till it overspreads the whole plains below,

—till woods and streams and rocks and verdant meads start into perceived existence; and one by one the long shadows shrink up and disappear, till the world stands clear and shadowless beneath the tropic noonday sun. River and cascade flash and sparkle—the green masses of the woods wave like leafy seas—birds awake and sing—the bounding deer and the bleating herds are again in motion: man's world is back again, and, elate with the sunny joy, he resumes the labours of life. No wonder, then, that Sabæism, the worship of Light, prevailed amongst all the leading nations of the early world. By the rivers of India, on the mountains of Persia, in the plains of Assyria, early mankind thus adored; the higher spirits in each country rising in spiritual thought from the solar orb up to Him whose vicegerent it seems—to the Sun of all Being, whose divine light irradiates and purifies the world of soul as the solar radiance does the world of sense. Egypt too, though its faith be but dimly known to us, joined in this worship; Syria raised grand temples to the Sun; the joyous Greeks sported with the thought while feeling it, almost hiding it under the mythic individuality which their lively fancy superimposed upon it. Even prosaic China makes offerings to the yellow orb of day; the wandering Celts and Teutons held feasts to it amidst the primeval forests of northern Europe; and with a savagery characteristic of the American aborigines, the sun-temples of Mexico streamed with human blood in honour of the beneficent orb!

With the primitive Hindoos as with the Persians, this religion took the form of a worship of Light, rather than of the sun itself. Although Surya (the sun) is not forgotten, it is to Indra and Agni, respectively personifications of the bright firmament and of fire, that their hymns and prayers are most frequently addressed. The Dawn, the Winds, are invoked as spirits; while the freak-doing Aswins, and demons (noxious powers) of the atmosphere, may be said to complete the simple supernaturalism of the Rig Veda. "In the Veda," says a native commen-

tator, "there are only three deities: Surya in heaven—Indra in the sky—and Agni on the earth." LIGHT, in its various manifestations,—such was the object of that early worship. Bright-haired and golden-handed, the Sun is the giver of abundance; his ray is called "life-bestowing;" coming from afar, he is said to remove all sins, and to have power to chase away sickness of the heart and yellowness of the body. Golden-haired Agni, however—as light, heat, and fire—calls forth their best affections. In allusion to the waking up of the household fire in the morning, he is said to give "happiness in a dwelling like a newly-born son;" and "men sit in his presence like sons in the dwelling of a parent." Both Agni and the Sun are emblems of purity. Of Ushas, the Dawn—who is called beloved and many-tinted—we read: "Born in the eastern quarter of the firmament, she displays a banner of rays of light,"—"rising from darkness, she brings health to human habitations,"—"she opens our doors, and makes our riches manifest,"—she "gives back all regions,"—she wakens the birds,—she "causes the sacred fire to be kindled, and men to prepare for sacrifice." Indra is a deity of strictly Indian origin—a personification of the Indian firmament. He is represented as young and handsome, with a beautiful nose and chin, wearing golden ear-rings, ever-joyous, and delighting in exhilarating draughts of the soma-juice. He is invoked to strike the demon Vritra, who withholds the periodical rains, upon which the fertility and vegetation of the country depend. Before the rains, the clouds gather in gradually darkening and enlarging masses; but no rain comes till a rattling thunderstorm rends the clouds, amidst which the forked lightning plays vividly, and lets loose the impetuous showers. "This," says the Veda, "is Indra, who comes loud-shouting in his car, and hurls his thunderbolt at the demon Vritra. . . . He strikes off the head of the earth-shaking Vritra with his rain-causing hundred-spiked bolt." The rattling of the storm, the trembling of the earth, and the darting of the lightnings, are all graphically indicated in this supposed combat

between the beneficent Indra and the obstinate demon. These storms are always preceded by sudden gusts, rushing sounds, and whirlwinds of dust, which are Indra's attendant allies the Maruts, or Winds, "at whose roaring every dweller upon earth trembles."

The hymns and prayers of the Vedas are the psalms of the Hindoos; and the earliest ones—some of those in the Rig Veda—are older than the Song of Miriam. They are the oldest extant hymns in the world; and in them the Hindoo nation appears lisping adoration from its cradle. Thus the earliest literature, the first recorded and compiled utterances of humanity, is the language of devotion. Let us see some of those hymns of the early Aryans. Here is part of a morning-hymn to Ushas, the Dawn :—

"Morning! child of heaven, appear!
Dawn with wealth our hearts to cheer,
Thou that spreadest out the light,
Dawn with food and glad our sight.
Gracious goddess! hear our words—
Dawn with increase of our herds!

. . . .

She hath dwelt in heaven of old,
May we now her light behold!
Which, dawning brightly from afar,
Stirreth up the harnessed car.

. . . .

Morning comes! the nurse of all—
Like a matron, at whose call
All that dwell the house within
Their appointed task begin.

. . . .

Morning! shine with joyful ray!
Drive the darkness far away!
Bring us blessings every day!" *

Here is part of a hymn to the Sun :—

"Risen in majestic blaze;
Lo! the Universe's eye,

* *Specimens of Old Indian Poetry.* Translated from the Original Sanskrit. By R. T. H. GRIFFITH, A.M. P. 4-5.

Vast and wondrous host of rays,
Shineth brightly in the sky.

Soul of all that moveth not,
Soul of all that moves below;
Lighteth he Earth's gloomiest spot,
And the heavens are all aglow!

See! he followeth the Dawn,
Brilliant in her path above;
As a youth, by beauty drawn,
Seeks the maiden of his love!

. . . . .

Hear us, O ye Gods! this day,
Hear us graciously, we pray!
As the Sun his state begins,
Free us from all heinous sins.

Mitra, Varun, Aditi!
Hear, O hear us graciously!
Powers of ocean, earth, and air,
Listen, listen to our prayer!" *

Here is part of a hymn to Agni:—

"Brilliant Agni! lo, to thee
Pour we offerings of *ghee*.
Oh! for this consume our foes,
Who on demons' aid repose!

Praise him in the sacrifice,
Agni, ever young and wise!
Glorious in his light is he,
Healer of all malady!

Purifying brilliant Fire!
Hear, great Agni! our desire—
Be thy care the Gods to bring
Hither to our offering." †

The Aryans were never great temple-builders,—inclining, like their cousins the Persians, and the Teutons of Europe, to worship in the temple of the Universe; and nearly all the magnificent temples for which India is famous are to be found in the peninsular portion of the country, where the population chiefly belongs to the pre-Aryan Tamul race. In the Vedic period the Aryans had no temples or idols of any kind. With

* *Specimens of Old Indian Poetry*, p. 1-3. † *Ibid.*, p. 17.

the exception of the public Soma-festivals, which took place in a large shed constructed for the purpose—and of the prayers offered up and rites performed on the eve of battle,—the worship appears to have been entirely domestic, carried on in the house of the worshipper. There were priests and *rishis* or holy men, who officiated on public or special occasions, and whose descendants swelled into the caste of the Brahmans ; but the domestic worship appears to have been conducted on the patriarchal principle, by the head of the family. At sunrise, the first act was to kindle the fire on the altar (which was commonly their hearth also), or rather to awaken it from the ashes in which it had slumbered through the night ; for in those days obtaining fire anew was a troublesome process, achieved by the friction of one piece of wood inserted in another. An offering of *ghee* or clarified butter, apparently dropped into the fire or embers (a rite as useful as devotional), then took place, accompanied by an invoking of the particular deity to whom the offering was made. The ritual introduced towards the close of this Vedic period prescribes hymns to the gods, to be chanted by priests at these morning offerings ; but doubtless the simple and quickly-performed offering of butter was all that was thought of by the people at large. In the prayers and hymns of the Vedas, as in the psalms of the Hebrews, we find petitions for protection from enemies, for victory over them, and sometimes for their destruction, particularly when they profess a different faith. But, unlike the effusions of the Royal singer of Israel, although abhorrence of sin is in some instances expressed, and deliverance from sin desired, there is little demand for such spiritual blessings. The benefits sought are for the most part of a temporal and personal kind—for wealth, food, life, children, cattle, &c. ; and believing, as those old Aryans rightly did, that we hold all things of God, it was very natural to make such petitions. It at least showed they were in earnest in their belief. In fact, their faith appears to have been of the liveliest kind ; for the tone of these prayers generally indicates a quiet con-

fidence that they will be granted, as a return for the gratification which the gods are supposed to derive from the offerings and praises. The Horse-sacrifice—evidently brought by them from their former home on the Steppes—was a rite which they in course of time came to regard with peculiar awe, and which was only performed on rare and important occasions. But the most characteristic feature of their religious observances at this time was the Soma-festival, which appears frequently to have been a sort of public ceremonial in honour of Indra, given at the expense of some holy man or raja, who acted on the occasion as invoker of the gods. The soma or moon-plant is a round smooth twining plant, peculiar to the Aravalli Hills, to the desert north of Delhi, and to the mountains of the Bolan Pass. The plants were gathered on the hills by moonlight, and brought home in carts drawn by rams. The stalks were bruised between stones, and placed, along with the juice, in a strainer of goat's hair, and were further squeezed by the priests' fingers, ornamented by rings of flattened gold. The juice, mixed with barley and clarified butter, fermented, forming the soma wine; and lastly, it was drawn off in a scoop for the gods, and a ladle for the priests, while the residue was drunk by the company present. Evidently they thought that the god should be as happy on the occasion as themselves; for in all their hymns Indra is said to rejoice in the soma wine, and in one hymn they say to him, "Thine inebriety is most intense; nevertheless thy acts are most beneficent." As a general sample, thus they sing:—

"Rejoice, Indra! open thy jaws; set wide thy throat; be pleased with our oblations! Drinker of the soma-juice! wielder of the thunderbolt! bestow upon us abundance of cows with projecting jaws!

"Thy swift horses, Indra! have uttered a loud sound announcing rain; the level earth anxiously expects its fall. The mighty Indra has shattered the guileful Vritra reposing in the cloud: heaven and earth shook, alarmed at the thundering

bolt of the showerer. Drinking the soma-juice, he (Indra) baffled the devices of the guileful demon.

"Drink, hero, Indra! drink the soma! Indra, hero! exulting in the solemn rites, quaff the soma-juice, and, repeatedly shaking it from thy beard, repair to the drinking of the libation poured forth to thee!"

Hindoos affirm that the Vedas were compiled 3000, but European critics say at most 1400, years before Christ, and some assign a much later date. That was the period at which the sacred hymns and prayers of the nation were compiled and arranged in their present shape. All of the hymns therefore must be of older, some of them of much older, date; probably ranging from 2000 B.C. downwards to the date of their compilation; such hymns only having been preserved as rooted themselves in the hearts of the community, and floated for generations on the stream of memory, till an organised priesthood arose to consecrate, and a literature to record them. There were no fixed creeds or cast-metal formulas of religion in those early times. The Vedic hymns are the free effusion of the élite of the nation—priests, holy men, and princes, who sang to the gods each in his own way. Unconsciously they were making creeds for the future time. There is no consistency observed in the hymns, save in their general complexion. They savour of different minds and different ages. Not only is there the diversity arising from a free effusion of the thoughts, fancies, and desires of variously-constituted minds, but they exhibit that gradual evolution of higher thought which marks the flight of time over a nation. For example, Agni is in one place regarded as simple fire, and is addressed as "thou to whom the wood gives birth;" in another, as the messenger of the gods—*i. e.*, as the medium through which the deities are invoked, and induced to be present at the sacrifice; and in another, as the great god who sustains the earth, and studs the sky with constellations. In like manner Indra is represented in some hymns simply as

a joyous quaffer of the soma-wine, and as a cloud-compelling deity, who, by his lightning sets loose the showers from the storm-clouds; while in other hymns, and sometimes even in the same one, he is recognised as the creator of the universe,—as "he who fixed firm the moving earth, and spread the spacious firmament." At other times it is the Sun who is regarded as the maker or soul of all. But by-and-by, out of those mental gropings and incongruous beliefs, a theistic unity evolves itself. Rising beyond Agni and Indra and the Sun, the sacred thinkers of the nation begin to catch sight of ONE of whom their former deities, the phenomena of the universe, are but separate manifestations, and who looms behind them vaguely, sublimely, incomprehensibly. The *Gayatri*, that pre-eminently holy text from the Vedas still murmured daily with profound reverence in the orisons of Brahmans, says, "Let us meditate on the sacred light of that Divine Sun, that it may illuminate our minds!" A prayer for spiritual light addressed to the Sun of all Being. They have turned the eye inwards, and HE dawns upon them, not through the senses, but through the soul. This is Brahm, the universal Soul,—personal in his phenomenal creatures, impersonal in himself. Even to say *He* is wrong: They spoke of him as "That," and as *Brahm* or Thought. In a hymn of the Yajur-Veda we read:—

"Fire is THAT: the Sun is THAT:
The air, the moon, such too is that pure Brahm.
He, prior to whom nothing was born,
And who became all beings. . . .
To what God should we offer oblations,
But to Him who made the fluid sky and solid earth,
Who fixed the solar orb . . . and framed the drops of rain?
To what God should we offer oblations,
But to Him whom heaven and earth mentally contemplate?
The wise man views that mysterious Being
In whom the universe perpetually exists,
Resting upon that sole support.
In Him is this world absorbed;
From Him it issues:
In creatures is He twined and wove, in various forms of being.

Let the wise man, conversant with holy writ,
Promptly celebrate that immortal Being,
The mysteriously existing and various abode." *

Well does Dr Müller observe that "there are hymns in the Vedas so full of thought and speculation, that at this early period no poet of any other nation could have conceived them." In addition to these verses, take the following hymn, in which the sacred bard rises in imaginative conception to picture what was, before even Creation took place, and when the *One* was alone in existence that was hardly existence, because without His thoughts, which are the worlds. "The gods," it will be observed, are spoken of as quite distinct from this great Supreme, and evidently as powers of the universe, the highest forms of created being, acting as regents over the rest of creation. Describing that abysmal past, before time began or the worlds were created, the Vedic bard thus sings:—

"Then there was no entity nor non-entity;
No world, nor sky, nor aught above it:
Nothing anywhere. . . .
Death was not;
Nor then was Immortality;
Nor distinction of the day or night;
But THAT breathed without affiation. . . .
Who knows and shall declare whence and why
This creation took place?
The Gods are subsequent to the production of this world:
Who then can know whence it proceeded,
Or whence this varied world uprose? . . .
HE who in the highest heaven is ruler knows indeed,
But not another can possess that knowledge." †

No nation but the Hindoos has ever thus ascended in thought

* COLEBROOKE'S *Essays* (edit. 1858), p. 32, 33.

† *Ibid.*, pp. 17, 18. Another translation gives a different reading of the concluding words of this hymn, and one which, though appearing very strange to a European, is quite in consonance with the tenets of some of the Indian schools of theosophy:—

"HE from whom all this great creation came,
Whether His will created or was mute,
The Most High Seer, that is in highest heaven,
He knows it,—or *perchance even He knows not.*"

beyond the epoch of creation, or has essayed to form a conception of the Deity when existing alone with himself. But the Hindoos do this frequently. "In the beginning," says another Veda, "*That* (*i. e.*, God) was SOUL only: nothing else existed." And then comes as sublime a conception of Creation as ever entered into the mind of man: "The thought came to HIM, *I wish to create worlds!*—and the worlds were created."

Such was the Vedic period, as seen in the Vedas. So primitive is the language of these Indian Scriptures that very few even of the Brahmans now understand it; and, strange marvel! the best attempt to lay open its contents has been made, not beside the sacred waters of the Ganges, but in England on the banks of the Isis. It is like the uncovering of a long-buried city.

Literature is almost the sole light of history. And when that light—after a chasm of darkness—again breaks on the Aryans, a thousand years and more have passed since their earliest hymns first rose on the Indian air, and four or five centuries have elapsed since the true Vedic period closed. In the interval mighty changes have occurred. The Aryans have overspread the entire plains of the Ganges and Jumna; they have met the sea again in the Bay of Bengal; they have even penetrated in adventurous bands into Southern India. They are separated into little states like the Greeks in ancient, and the Germans in modern Europe; and they have two broad divisions, the Solar and Lunar races, between whom there has been a great and disastrous war, which figures as prominently in their poetic annals as does the Trojan war (between the Ionian and European Hellenes) in the poetry of Greece. The Aryans are now a dominant race, environed by and intermingled with the alien population of the country; and, in consequence, the principle of caste (unknown in the Vedic period) has been adopted, expanded into laws, and invested with a divine sanction. The Aryans themselves are becoming a composite body. The Kshatriyas—at first only the *de facto* rulers and military chiefs, but now become a hereditary caste—

have won for themselves a secular supremacy among the general Ayran population, constituting a royal tribe, somewhat resembling the Psargadæ among the ancient Persians. On the other hand, the descendants of the early priests and hymn-composers of the Vedic period have gradually risen to an intellectual and sacerdotal supremacy, styling themselves Brahmans —students and worshippers of *Brahm*, the Supreme Being regarded as Thought. These Brahmans are not simply a caste of priests; they are a Levitical tribe on a large scale, engaging in secular pursuits, and even war, but specially distinguished for their intellect and sanctity. They are the learned classes of the nation,—sending forth from their ranks priests and devotees, filling the learned professions, acting as counsellors or prime-ministers to kings, and as readers and expounders of the Vedas to the people. A hereditary noblesse of intellect—a secular priesthood of Mind, more reverenced than any other which ever existed. By this time, too, the Vedas—the ancient hymns of the nation, intermingled with liturgies of later date—have become so invested with that veneration which ever attends antiquity, that they are now regarded as sacred scriptures inspired (in fact, "created") by the Deity. Orginally composed by rajahs and rishis, chiefs and holy men, around whom time has gathered a veil of mystery, and who loom in vague and exaggerated shape through the mists of the past, these hymns, for long the sole literature of the nation, have become honoured with the title of the "fountains of light" or "knowledge," and are regarded as the recondite source of all religion and theology. Profound meanings are now attached to the simplest phrases, and material desires or expressions are invested with a spiritual import. Just as a preacher of present times, indulging his fancy, will select for text the wells of Baca or the palm-trees of Elim,—"the gold of that land is good," or suchlike—and therefrom deduce high spiritual lessons; so the Brahmans in earnest came to see divinest truth in the most commonplace passages of their "inspired" book. In this

way authority was found (we believe without any *intention* to deceive) for social and theological doctrines of later development, and of which the Vedic writers never dreamt.

The Code of Manu is the lamp by which we see this second period. The man or body of men who drew it up withdrew themselves from view, and sought to invest it with supreme authority by attributing its authorship to a mythic saint of superhuman nature. Proceeding from the learned or Brahmanical class, the Code seeks to exalt that class above all the others, and to exempt it almost entirely from the rule of the civil power. It is the work of one who was probably as much of a practical legislator as could be found in those times and among that people. It is a code of theology and morality as well as of law. Its theology is popular,—representing the general creed of the educated and middle classes, without quite soaring into the subtle and sublime speculations of the select few. It shows us Monotheism, and it grapples with Cosmogony. An impersonal God—a belief not uncommon with philosophers—is no God at all to the masses; who, when offered this belief, either give no heed to any Supreme, or conceive a personal deity or deities for themselves. Accordingly, in the Code of Manu, the impersonal Brahm recedes into the background, and the personal Brahma comes forward as the active agent in creation. Brahma is deity individualised. From the quiescent impersonal Thought, the deity of the abstract philosophy, emerges the active and personal Thinker. As yet there is little mythology among the Aryans, but here it comes into play. "The self-existent and eternal Lord," says the Code, "soul of all beings, whom the spirit alone can perceive, visible in parts, yet whom no one comprehends," having resolved on the work of creation, "produced first the waters, and deposited therein a germ, which became an egg brilliant like gold sparkling with a thousand rays, and in which the Supreme caused himself to be born as Brahma," the *Logos* or active principle of Deity, by whom in due time was formed the world, gods

(*devas*), spirits, and men. The deities inferior to Brahma are nearly the same as those worshipped in the Vedic period. They are the souls or regents of the elements and heavenly bodies,—as Indra, the firmament; Agni, fire; Varuna, the waters; Prithivi, the earth; Surya, the sun; Chandra, the moon; Vrihaspati, and other planets: or impersonations of principles,—as Dharma, god of justice; Yama, death; Dhanwantara, god of medicine, &c. These deities are not eternal, neither is the universe; and "the gods," created by Brahma as the higher powers of this universe, will come to an end when it does.* At intervals of 4⅓ billions of years, called a "day of Brahma" (says the Code), the universe is dissolved,—Creation vanishes,—Brahma himself, the active power of the Supreme, relapses into non-existence, and nought remains but the impersonal BRAHM—alone, in the silence, without even his thoughts, which are the worlds. This is the Sleep of Brahma. Judging of the Supreme by His works—taking creation, so far as they could see it, as the exponent of His nature—and seeing that action and rest, day and night, waking and sleep, are but varied symptoms of a grand principle pervading the whole universe of existence, they conceived that this principle belongs to the nature of the Supreme himself; and that, as man finds comfort in rest and sleep, so, but in a transcendently grander form, the Supreme finds happiness in resting at intervals from his thoughts (*i. e.*, creation), and relapsing into a state of per-

* This remarkable tenet of Brahmanical faith is unparalleled, we believe, in the religions of the world, save in that of the old Norsemen of Europe, who believed that Odin and his dozen subordinate gods ruled only for an appointed time, and would be overtaken at last by that dread day called "the Twilight of the Gods," when all things were to come to an end. Is not this "twilight of the gods" just the Brahman's "night of Brahma"? Observe also, as another striking indication of the relationship between the Scandinavians and the Indian Aryans, that, just as the latter had their sacred Mount Meru in the middle of the earth, with the sea surrounding all, and other worlds lying concentric around it; so the Norse had their Mount Asgard (the abode of Odin and the Æsir) in the midst of Midgard, or the "middle earth," while round that earth flows the great sea, in a ring, with various outlying worlds arranged concentrically around.

fect quiescence, neither existence nor non-existence, of which human sleep is a feeble emblem. Again awaking, after an equally immense interval of time—called the night of Brahma, —the Supreme Mind gradually crystallises into Thought: simultaneously Creation recommences—as his thoughts grow, the worlds are developed—and another universe exists. The present world, according to the Code, has four *Yugs*, or ages, to pass through—varying in length from 1,728,000 years for the earliest to 432,000 years for the latest; in which latest mankind live at present, and of which 5000 years have already flown. It is strange how widespread among mankind is the dream of a Golden Age in the far past, and of a progressive deterioration of things ever since. The four ages of Grecian mythology—of Gold, Silver, Brass, and Iron—have a perfect parallel in the Code of Manu; although in the latter the idea takes a vaster shape than the merely pretty fable of Greece. In consequence of the "illicit acquirement of riches and knowledge," says the Code, mankind, who were at first "exempt from maladies, and obtained the accomplishment of all their desires," lost their regard for truth and justice, and with it their "honourable advantages," which decreased by a fourth part every Age; so that the limit of human life, which was 400 years in the first Age, is now only 100,—and other blessings have diminished in like proportion.

The morality inculcated by the Code is substantially the same as that of other civilised nations. It pays regard not only to overt actions, but also to the thoughts of the heart. "Every thought, word, or act bears good or bad fruit; and by them is determined each one's different condition." The immortality of the soul was more thoroughly believed among the Hindoos than in any other contemporaneous nation; and even at the present day, there is no country in the world where the undying nature of the soul is more fully realised, or imparts to the people such a superb calm in the prospect of death,—as was frequently evidenced during the late Revolt. After death, says

the Code, the good go to Swarga or paradise, and the wicked to hell, where their enjoyments or sufferings correspond both in kind and in degree to the peculiar virtues or vices of each individual. After having thus suffered or enjoyed, the souls again enter earthly existence as plants, animals, men, or spirits—mean or noble, evil or good, according to the condition of each particular soul; and they continue to migrate from one form of existence to another—rising, as life brings its lessons of wisdom and virtue, — till the topmost round of earthly existence is reached, by the long-wandering soul being born in the caste of the Brahmans—the highest form of that new birth being in the person of a *rishi*, or holy man of that caste. What next? it may be asked. Swarga, or "Heaven," as we should call it, is not the last stage of happiness in the estimation of the Hindoo. The practice of virtue and the religious rites takes men to Swarga—*i. e.*, confers happiness in the other world,—but it needs something else before the saint can attain to that perfect union with God, that absorption into the Divine Essence, which is the grand aim and end of Hindoo life and religion. "To do no ill, to study and comprehend the Vedas, to practise devotional austerity, to subdue the senses, to *know God*, are the chief means for attaining final beatitude." But the chiefest of these is a knowledge of the Supreme Soul, through meditation thereon. "Beholding the supreme Soul in all beings, and all beings in the supreme Soul, and offering up one's own soul as if in sacrifice, man becomes identified with the glorious self-existing One—his individuality merging into and losing itself in the Divine Essence." "Thus the man"—such are the concluding words of the Code—"who in his own soul recognises the Soul Supreme present throughout all creation, obtains the happiest lot of all, to be at last absorbed into Brahm."

Thus the grand question of Hindoo religion was, as it still is, How may Man become God? And its grand object was, to make man more than man, — a most aspiring, and in some respects noble aim, but one very apt to lead its votaries to something

lower instead of higher than the level of humanity. Ill-contented with human life—indeed regarding it simply as a burden of sorrow; despising the pleasures of the senses, and hating them as the seductive bonds which keep the soul individualised and apart from that divine ocean of being and happiness, the Great ONE; the disciples of truth are enjoined to practise self-denial and austerities until they wholly free themselves from the natural feelings of humanity, so that nothing they see or hear, touch or taste or mentally experience, can excite in them either joy or sorrow. In the school of asceticism and contemplation, pleasure and pain are to become meaningless words, ere the soul can escape from its finite individualised form of existence, and merge, like a drop reunited to the ocean, in the abyss of the Divine Essence. Hence, in this second stage of Indian history presented to us in the Code, we see holy men studying with intense meditation the Vedas,—sometimes withdrawn into the woods and lonely places, where they lead a hermit-life of hardship and contemplation, or impose upon themselves ascetic practices of intensest rigour. Anything to mortify the body, and still the mind into eddyless meditation upon the Supreme—that all-present and ever-joyous Soul of Being, of which they are like severed rays longing to be reunited to the parent Sun. It is only a small portion of any community that can become devotees: the mass of men have neither the high thoughts which incite to such self-sacrifice, nor the strength to practise it. Even of the Brahmans we must not think that many practised this terribly austere life; yet it behoves us to say that, as even modern India shows, the amount and terrible nature of the ascetic life and penance imposed on themselves by numbers of the Hindoos, at the prompting of their religious belief, exceeds anything of the kind which has been seen elsewhere in the long life of the world.

In the Code of Manu, as in the Koran, ablutions and personal cleanliness are so much regarded that they are made

parts of religion; and many things are forbidden, on purely arbitrary grounds, as producing ceremonial defilement. In later times these ceremonial requirements became greatly increased in number, as also the severity of the penalties attached to their violation: so that Hindoos defiled by contact with "impure objects" nowadays lose their caste, and are expelled from the community of their fellows, sometimes even being held in danger of hell. The very shadow of an Englishman falling on a Brahman's cooking-vessel is enough to make the latter throw away his meal! But we find no authority for such severity in the Code of Manu. Contact with pig's fat in a cartridge was thought by our Sepoys to cost them both caste and heaven; whereas the Code only enjoins that "a *Brahman* who shall have *purposely eaten* pork shall be degraded:" if he has eaten it involuntarily, a penance suffices for full atonement; and it is added, "for other things, let him [merely] fast a day." Indeed, although the Code abounds in semi-religious prohibitions as frivolous and more so than those of the Pharisees in regard to cups and platters, yet it is to be observed that these prohibitions are exclusively addressed to the "twice-born" class (a very small section of the entire Indian population, forming perhaps hardly a majority even in the districts peculiarly their own), whose conduct was to be the beau-ideal of the national life; and also that the expiation enjoined for the transgression of those prohibitions is in most cases so exceedingly easy and simple as to be merely nominal. So that those parts of the Code where the injunctions are most minute, and appear to us most arbitrary and unreasonable, apparently were designed to carry no graver weight with them than the rules of good-breeding do amongst ourselves. But in course of time the original object of institutions and observances frequently becomes forgotten, and the halo of antiquity suffices to glorify into an end that which at first was only a means. The world all over at this hour is full of such things. And in India, by this process, the prohibitions of caste have not only been pre-

served in apparently undiminished rigour, but unquestionably have been multiplied exceedingly beyond the requirements of the Code of Manu. In truth, those who desire to overthrow the caste-system in India, may do so most effectually, and without offending the prejudices of the natives, by quoting against it not only the Vedas, which lend no countenance to caste as a religious ordinance, but also the Code of Manu, which prescribes no such complex development of the system as that which has grown up in the aftertimes.

Two or three centuries after Brahmanism and Caste had been thus authoritatively established in the Code—that is, in the sixth century before Christ—there arose a new religion, which totally ignored the old one, and actually for a time supplanted it as the State religion of India. This was Budhism, founded by Gotama, otherwise called Sakya Muni, a Kshatriya prince of Oude. A high-priest of the Abstract, and believing that the only possible revelation from the Supreme is that which comes from within, Gotama paid no regard to the customs or beliefs of his countrymen, and educed a new faith from the luminous depths of his own soul. It is as a social revolution that Budhism is most remarkable. In India, as often happens in a lesser degree elsewhere, a good deal of what was venerated as religion was merely social usage, for the better establishment of which a Divine sanction had been feigned or imagined. Gotama rejected all this, and a good deal more. He denied the inspiration and authority of the Vedas, and with it the popular gods and mythology; he entirely repudiated caste; he denied the spiritual supremacy of the Brahmans; and he offered his religion to all men alike, Brahman and Sudra, bond and free,—whereas, for a Sudra even to look on the Vedas, or be taught their contents, was forbidden by the Brahmanical system. Gotama entirely ignored, too, the endless prohibitions and formalism of the old faith, and enjoined simply an observance of the fundamental points of morality, along with a prohibition of animal food and the use of intoxicating liquors. He knocked

off the social and spiritual shackles of the people, and directed their attention to the simple and weightier matters of religion. This was the strong point of Budhism ; and hence the popularity it so quickly attained, spreading among the non-Aryan (*i. e.*, low-caste) population as well as amongst the Aryans, until it became the dominant faith from the Himalayas to Ceylon. In its theology it so far agreed with Brahmanism, that it regarded Mind as the great attribute of the Deity ; but it reduced the conscious god of Vedantism into an unconscious Supreme Intelligence (*Adibudha*), in whom the worlds exist, yet are evolved at first without his consciousness, and proceed without his care. Perhaps the best way in which we can make intelligible to the European reader the difference in the fundamental ideas of Vedantic and Budhistic theology, is to say, that in the former the worlds are the projected thoughts of a waking, and in the latter of a sleeping, Deity. Budhism held that the Supreme One, unconscious in his unity, only awakes to consciousness in the person of his creatures,—all of whom (according to Indian philosophy) are fractional emanations of Himself ; and the grand characters who appear at intervals to revolutionise the world were regarded as the highest manifestations of the Supreme with which we have to do, and therefore as the natural and rightful objects of human worship. These grand and saintly persons were called Budhas, earthly representatives of the Adi Budha ; and the last of these was held to have been this Gotama, who founded, or at least for the first time definitely and authoritatively promulgated, this creed within the limits of India.

Although Brahmanism, by its principle of spiritual pantheism, implies that all men, and beings of every kind, are emanations or parts of the Deity—differing in qualities, and therefore in honour,—it is not till we come to Budhism that we find the doctrine of divine incarnations made the basis of religious law and worship. The Brahmans, though each believing himself a part of the Supreme, worshipped chiefly that Supreme in his

transcendent and invisible unity,—giving a mere minor worship or devotional respect to those elements of nature and principles of mind in which Divinity seemed to them pre-eminently present. The Budhists, on the other hand, paid no reverence to sun or moon, or to the powers of earth and air, neither did they reverence as gods any personifications of mental qualities,—indeed they seem to have held pantheism in its general aspect (that is to say, the worship of God *in Nature*) very loosely; but they exalted into exclusive supremacy the doctrine of the Supreme becoming incarnate at long intervals in the person of certain Men, to whom in consequence was due the worship of the rest of mankind. The Budhas are represented in sculpture sometimes as standing upright, but more generally as seated cross-legged; always in an attitude of deep meditation (impassive abstraction being the Hindoo beau-ideal of happiness), with a placid countenance and curled hair. The Adi Budha, or Supreme Intelligence, they held, was an unconscious being, who therefore could or did pay no regard to the ongoings of creation: it was only in his conscious state, as incarnate in those rare men called Budhas, that he became an object of worship. Budhism is therefore a worship of deified saints—a religious hero-worship; and the Divinity *in man* is regarded as the sole and true object of reverence and worship to mankind.* Out of this worship of "divine men" grew a veneration for the relics of such saints—a feeling unknown to the Brahmanical faith; and over those relics (a few hairs, a

* Agreeing in this respect, and this only, with M. Comte, Gotama appears to have held, that as humanity is the highest manifestation of Being of which we have any cognisance, therefore it is to the chiefs or "representative men" of the human race that our worship is due. But a mighty difference between the Indian and French philosopher is this,—that while the former derived everything from God as the supreme mind or soul, the latter ignored both God and soul; and whereas Comte held that great men were to be worshipped simply as the highest forms of humanity, Gotama held that they were to be worshipped for their peculiar divinity, as special incarnations of the Supreme. With the Hindoo sage the first thought was God —with the French philosopher the sole thought was Man.

bone, or a tooth) were erected those solid cupolas or bell-shaped monuments, often of stupendous size, which are exclusively associated with the Budhist religion. In Budhism, too, there arose monastic orders and monasteries, at a period antecedent to the establishment of the same system in Europe. As caste was not acknowledged, these monastic orders were open to all classes of the Indian population ; but the monks or priests were strictly bound to celibacy, and to the renunciation of nearly all the pleasures of sense. They had temples and monasteries, of which we have still models in those ones so wonderfully hewn out in rock in various parts of the Bombay Presidency ; and in those monasteries the Budhist monks lived together, eating together in one hall, slept sitting in a prescribed posture, and apparently only quitted the monastery for the purpose of receiving alms, which they did for a part of every day, or once a-week to march in a body to bathe. They went barefoot, with shaven heads and chins, wearing a yellow dress ; and they had a daily routine of services in their chapels, and processions in which there were chanting, incense, and tapers. In fact, in most respects they closely resembled the monastic orders of Europe.

A religion which recognised no social or racial distinctions had a good chance of being popular in a country like India, where the bulk of the population was still non-Aryan, and where caste reserved its choice privileges for the few. Budhism became triumphant even in Hindostan, the chief seat of Brahmanical power, during the reign of Asoka, in the third century before Christ ; and by the end of that century it had not only spread over Southern India, but had been introduced into Ceylon. Little is known of its subsequent history ; but seven hundred years afterwards—in the beginning of the fifth century after Christ—we find it on the decline in the Punjab, and languishing in the last stage of decay in the provinces on the Jumna and Ganges. Capila, the birthplace of Gotama, was ruined and deserted—"a wilderness untenanted by man ;" but

his religion was in full vigour in Ceylon, in which island it still flourishes to this day. Again the veil of obscurity covers India and its religious history. We know there were religious disputes and contests between the Brahmanical and Budhist parties; that the latter suffered considerable persecution; that they were expelled from the Deccan in the eighth or ninth century, but still possessed considerable power in Hindostan; and that in Southern India and in Guzerat they flourished as late as the twelfth century of our era. In its later stages, Budhism in India merged into Jainism—a form of religion which appears to have originated in the sixth or seventh century; to have become conspicuous in the eighth or ninth century; reached its highest prosperity in the eleventh, and declined after the twelfth. The chief seats of Jainism were the southern portion of the peninsula, Guzerat, and western Hindostan—that is to say, in the very localities where Budhism longest held its ground: a circumstance which, taken in conjunction with the fact that there are still Jains in India but no Budhists, confirms us in our opinion that Budhism died away into Jainism, and that the latter is not a rival religion, but simply the last form which Budhism took ere it disappeared from the Indian soil. The character of the religion points to the same conclusion; for it is a mixture or compromise between Budhism and the popular creeds of India, and shows how the latter were gaining ground upon the simpler but more abstract creed of Gotama. In its essence Jainism agrees with Budhism, only its chief objects of worship are called not Budhas but Tirtankeras,—these being a limited number of saints who have raised themselves by austerities to a superiority over the rest of creation, but who remain in a state of apathetic beatitude, insensible to the ongoings of the world. In fact, in Jainism as in Budhism, the higher one rises above humanity and approaches the divine, the more nearly does his condition approach to a virtual or real nonentity! Like the Budhists, the Jains reject the divine character of the Vedas, and have no sacrifices or respect for fire; also they have monastic orders who subsist on

alms. But, on the other hand, they admit the whole of the Hindoo gods, and worship some of them, although quite subordinate to their own deified saints: they respect the Vedas in all points not at variance with their own creed; and, in direct contrariety to Budhism, they recognise the principle and rules of caste. Let it be noted, therefore, that Polytheism and Caste were the two powers which vanquished Budhism in India, and became incorporated in the mixed religion into which Budhism sank in its downward course to extinction.

We have now come down to the thirteenth or fourteenth century of our era,—we have reached the beginning of the modern period of Hindoo religion. What do we find? People talk of the stationary character of Hindoo religion, just as they talk of the unchanging institutions of China, or as they figure to themselves all Africa an expanse of sandy desert. At a distance mountains appear monotonous in surface all over, but variety appears as we approach. In the same manner, and no otherwise, the history of a country appears monotonous only when we know little of it. Closer inspection always reveals the truth, that there is no such thing as a standstill in the life of nations. In history, as in the material universe, everything is moving on. While one system or belief is in the ascendant, its predecessor is just dying, and its destined successor is being born. So when, after an ascendancy of probably half-a-dozen centuries, and an existence thrice as long, the cognate faiths of Budhism and Jainism expired or sank out of sight in the Indian world, what came next? Brahmanism again. But not the Brahmanism of the Vedas or of the Code of Manu. Brahmanism had triumphed, and thrown off the Budhist heresy. It had lived side by side with it in various alternations of fortune, until at length India once more acknowledged the Brahmans as its spiritual leaders and social lords. But Brahmanism, too, had changed. It had gradually spread over the non-Aryan peoples of India, and in doing so had become overlaid or incrusted with the beliefs and superstitions of the general popu-

lation. It had also borrowed from, or been affected by, Budhism. In the Vedic period, animal food was in unquestioned use among the Aryans ; horses and cows were offered in sacrifices, and their flesh was common diet ; we even find a great saint, Vamadeva, dining off nothing less polluted than the entrails of a dog. In the period of the Code, again, we find numerous regulations in force as to what should be eaten or not eaten ; but the general principle that man is an omnivorous animal was fully acknowledged. "It is for the maintenance of the vital spirit that Brahma has made this world : all that exists, whether mobile or immobile (*i. e.*, animal or vegetable), serves as food for living beings. The immobile beings (*i. e.*, plants) are the prey of those who move (*i. e.*, animals) ; those who have not teeth are the prey of those who have teeth ; those without hands, of those who have hands ; the cowardly of the brave. The man who, even every day, lives on the flesh of not-forbidden animals, commits no fault ; for Brahma has created certain living beings to be eaten, and others to eat them." * Budhism, however—doubtless giving expression to a tendency already existing in some quarters —forbade the use of animal food entirely, and made it a sin to hurt any sentient being. And when, two thousand years after the Code, we again catch sight of Brahmanism in the ascendant, we find that it likewise has entirely proscribed the use of animal food. We find, too, that it has agreed with conquered Budhism in having orders of devotees, not monastic, but some of them still more ascetic than even the Budhist monks. Idols, also, have won their way into the Brahmanical or Aryan religion. In the time of the Vedas there were neither temples nor idols ; and at the later period of the Code, although in one or two places "the sacred images" are mentioned with respect, idol-worship was certainly not recognised ; and even temples appear to have been unthought of, or held unnecessary. Budhism, however, introduced both of those adjuncts of worship—though apparently without any sanction from the founder of that religion ;

* *Laws of Manu*, book v. § 28, 29, 30.

and Brahmanism, when it reappears in the ascendant, is found to have given its countenance to idols to a still greater extent than its defunct rival, and to have taken in a moderate degree to temple-building.

Whence those changes? Whence this gradually-increasing tendency towards idolatry, and to a less spiritual or abstract form of worship? The religious philosophy of the Brahmans had been refining and expanding in the interval, why then this degradation in the general worship of the people? Because that spiritual Aryan nation, enveloped by and extending its rule over large masses of an earlier polytheistic and idolatrous population, had, partly from policy, and partly by natural contagion, allowed their religion to sink towards that of the great bulk of the population. It could not be otherwise. In every nation there are different grades of mind; and while the grosser, more grandiose, and (on the whole) gayer worship of the Tamulese and other pre-Aryan peoples would have its attractions for the *οἱ πολλοί* of the Aryan nation, the educated and more elevated classes of the Aryans would seek to raise the religious beliefs of the inferior peoples to the level of their own. The unavoidable result was a compromise. In seeking to elevate the ruder faiths of the other Indian races, the Brahmans had, at least externally, to lower their own. And manifestly the manner in which they proceeded was this. As they held the doctrine that the Supreme is present in all his creatures, the animating Soul of all creation—of whom all objects, sun, moon, and stars, men, genii, plants, animals, are but the variously individualised parts—it was easy for the Brahmans to reconcile their faith in the One God with the polytheism of the pre-Aryan peoples, by regarding the many gods of the latter as simply incarnations or manifestations of the One. In this way, by one stroke, the multitude of fantastic gods of (what might be called) the heathen were attached as an outer fringe to the pantheistic monotheism of the Brahmans; and the two systems, although so dissimilar, became thenceforth united without any

visible chasm. Sometimes from policy, oftener doubtless in perfect good faith, the Brahmans taught the inferior peoples that each of their local deities was simply their grand god under one of his endless manifestations. In this way to Brahma were added, at different times, Siva, Vishnoo, Kalee, and the other deities which now fill the Indian Pantheon.*

Of these deities Siva appears to have been the earliest adopted by the Brahmans, who have continued to the present day to accord to that deity their special faith and favour. About 320 B.C., as Alexander was descending the Indus, we are told that the cattle of the tribes dwelling between that river and the Belooch hills were all stamped with the symbol of Siva; and about twenty years afterwards, the ambassador of Seleucus at Patna, on the Ganges, describes Siva worship as being the popular religion in the hills, celebrated in tumultuous festivals, the worshippers anointing their bodies, wearing crowns of flowers, and sounding bells and cymbals. The generative principle of nature is the power over which Siva specially presides, and the bull (like the Apis of Egypt) is the animal sacred to him: and in this circumstance, we believe, will be found the origin of that veneration for the bull which, for probably two thousand years, has prevailed amongst the Brahmans, but of which not a vestige is to be found either in the Vedas or in the Laws of Manu. In the Indian poems Siva is represented

* Siva and Vishnoo are mentioned, or are said to be mentioned, in a passage of the Code which is as follows:—"The Soul is the assemblage of the Gods. . . . Let the Brahman contemplate Indou (the moon) in his heart; the Genii of the eight regions (or cardinal points) in his organs of hearing; Vishnoo in his walk; Hara in his muscular force; Agni in his speech," &c. In the native commentaries on this passage, Vishnoo is called one of the twelve Roodras or demi-gods; and Hara, one of the twelve spirits or deities who preside over the months, is *said to be* used here as a synonyme for Siva —though evidently this is a mere after-thought, adopted for the sake of getting Siva mentioned by the "divine" lawgiver. In any case, it is to be observed that both Vishnoo and Hara are mentioned only this once, and in this incidental way, in the lengthy Code—mere names, or indeed mere *nominum umbræ*—and that neither of them corresponds in any way with the character and position of the Siva and Vishnoo of later times.

as the god of the Himalaya; his *kailas* or paradise is placed in those mountains; and very ancient temples to him have been found in the same region, as also in Cashmere. Manifestly he belongs originally to northern India—a pre-Aryan deity of the hills and hill-tribes which border and intersect Aryavarta, "the land of the Aryans," now called Hindostan. Vishnoo, on the other hand, though in the time of Seleucus an object of worship to the general population in the plains of Hindostan (the majority of whom would be Sudras), has had his stronghold in southern India, where probably he was worshipped by the Tamul races before the Aryans settled on the Ganges, or whither they retired before the powerful invaders, carrying their worship with them. At this day it is only in southern India that Vishnoo is worshipped in his proper character,—being adored by the Tamulese as Jagannath, or Lord of the Universe; whereas in Hindostan his worship has been entirely supplanted by that of Rama and Krishña, two heroes of the Aryan race, whom the Brahmans very politically represented as incarnations of the popular Vishnoo. In like manner the pre-Aryan Mahrattas were taught to consider that their great divinity Candoba (represented as an armed horseman) was an incarnation of Siva, that deity being the one whom the Brahmans had earliest and specially adopted. Both Siva and Vishnoo have temples and idols in abundance; but Brahma, the other of the three great gods of India, has none. Why is this? Precisely, because the two former were gods of the temple-building idol-worshipping Tamul and other pre-Aryan peoples; whereas Brahma is the god of the Aryans, who—like the ancient Persians, or the Teutons as described by Tacitus — preferred to worship the Supreme and Invisible One without either temples or idols. We know that this is a new idea: but we are convinced that the more the subject is investigated and considered, the more clearly will this original distinction, yet gradual intermingling, of the Aryan and pre-Aryan faiths become visible and ac-

knowledged, even though it is unsuspected at present by the Brahmans themselves.

The old and still-prevalent explanation of the singular fact that Brahma has no idols or temples is, that as Creation is a *fait accompli*, no one need trouble himself about the Creator (Brahma), whereas the case is very different with respect to the Preserver and Destroyer—as they term Vishnoo and Siva. To the philosophical historian or ethnologist this must appear a very weak explanation compared with that which is advanced in the text. And it is easy to show that this so-called "explanation" is not only a lame theory, but rests upon entirely mistaken facts. However fierce Siva is sometimes represented, and whatever ill may be said of him by the sect of Vishnoo, he is regarded by his followers as a beneficent deity. So far from being worshipped as the Destroyer, it is for the very opposite quality and functions that he receives the homage of his votaries. His symbol is the *lingam;* the animal sacred to him is the bull; and at his festivals, barren women strive to catch the fruits and flowers thrown down by his whirling devotees, in the belief that if they catch these they will become prolific. Thus, it is not as the destroying, but as the generative principle that he is worshipped. Neither is Brahma a mere defunct god of Creation; nor is Vishnoo's godship confined simply to the work of preservation,—it extends (*e. g., vide* the "Bhagavat-gita") to the entire lordship of the universe. What has led European writers wrong on the subject is the notion that these three chief gods of India are related to each other in a Divine Triad, somewhat resembling the Christian Trinity. This is a mistake. Brahma, Vishnoo, and Siva stand in no harmonious or complementary relations to one another. They are independent, and indeed rival gods. The followers of each extol their particular deity as the Supreme, and disparage or entirely ignore the other two,—as might be shown at length from the Puranas and other works, as well as in the everyday life of the people. The real cause, we repeat, for the absence

of idols and temples to Brahma is because he was the god of the non-idolatrous Aryans, who preferred to worship in the spirit; whereas Siva and Vishnoo, along with Kalee, are the great deities of the idolatrous and pre-Aryan nations, who were peculiarly given to religious pomps and superstitions.

The existence of these different layers of population, and their partial intermingling, we maintain, is the true key to the many enigmas and incongruities in the social, and especially in the religious, history and condition of India. In the first portion of this essay we have applied this new view in explanation of the varying externals of Indian religion, as we now apply it to the creeds and castes. Once stated and illustrated, we feel confident that it will commend itself to every intelligent and independent investigator of Indian history and civilisation.

The fruit of this change, the gospel of the new conglomerate religion which thus arose, is the Puranas (a series of writings, eighteen in number, beginning about 800 A.D., and successively added to till about the fifteenth century), in which the grotesque popular legends, and the extravagant fancies of the poets, have been brought together, and which in general estimation are respected as much as the Vedas or the Code. In fact, just as the Code is erroneously held to be based entirely on the Vedas, so these Puranas are likewise imagined to be in entire accordance with the spirit and text of the Vedic Scriptures. Nothing can be further from the truth. The Puranas contain theogonies, cosmogonies, mythologies, legends, and fragments of history, philosophical speculations, and instructions for religious ceremonies, and are not only quite inconsistent with the Hindoo Scriptures, but are entirely at variance with one another. Some are written by worshippers of Siva, others by followers of Vishnoo, and others still by the upholders of the old faith in Brahma. In these Puranas the grand grotesqueness and incongruity of the Indian mind appear at every turn. Never elsewhere did mythology revel in such extravagance. "The churning of the ocean by the gods and Asuras, for the purpose of procuring the

nectar of immortality, and the subsequent stratagem by which the gods defrauded their coadjutors of the prize obtained;—the descent of the Ganges from heaven on the invocation of a saint, and its falling with violence on the head of Siva, wandering for years amidst his matted locks, and tumbling at last in a mighty stream upon the earth with all its train of fishes, snakes, turtles, and crocodiles;—the production of Ganesa, without a father, by the intense wishes of Devee—his temporary slaughter by Siva, who cut off his head and afterwards replaced it with that of an elephant, the first that came to hand in the emergency,—such narratives," says Elphinstone, "with the quarrels of the gods; their occasional loves and jealousies; their wars with men and demons; their defeats, flights, and captivity; their penances and austerities for the accomplishment of their wishes; their speaking weapons; the numerous forms they have assumed, and the delusions with which they have deceived the senses of those whom they wished to injure:" all this would be necessary to show fully the religious beliefs of the general population of India. As we see them in the Puranas, the Indian gods are often enraged without a cause, and reconciled without a motive. "The same deity is sometimes powerful enough to destroy his enemies with a glance, or to subdue them with a wish; and at other times is obliged to assemble numerous armies to accomplish his purpose, and is very near failing after all."

Amidst all this religious absurdity and spiritual grossness, pure Brahmanism has never become extinct. Down the long and ever-broadening stream of Indian history, growing darker and more jumbled as one after another the many cross currents have blended together, Brahmanism—with its high faith in the One Supreme and the soul's immortality—has floated steadily above the troubled abysses; even like those votive lamps of light which one sees by night on the broad bosom of the Ganges, launched by pious hands, and glimmering on with ruddy flame amidst the shadows and darkness. In India, above

all countries of the world, we must learn to discriminate. Even in Europe, do we not behold the worship of images and of pictures—the adoration of relics—the institution of vain rites, from the observance of which the people are taught to expect salvation—an infallible Pontiff, like a Lama or Budha, by whose lips the Deity is supposed to speak, — Christ obscured by the worship of the Virgin and saints, and God the Father as removed from the thoughts of the people as any Indian God of the Void !—while witchcraft, miracles, saintly apparitions, divination, and a hundred follies, disport themselves amongst the masses? And yet, amidst all this rubbish and unintentional profanity, pure Christianity lives on and grows more spiritual still. Even so, it is but just to say, have the high faiths which belong to Brahmanism lived on, and live still, amongst the select minds of that race, above all the filth, folly, and spiritual darkness which pervade the bulk of the population. Turn to the Bhagavat-gita, a poem written in the seventh or eighth century of our era, and see in what lofty emphatic language the soul's nature and immortality are described. The passage is addressed to the brave chief Arjuna, who hesitates to engage in battle because his kinsmen are in the hostile ranks; but to whom his divine counsellor Krishna makes reply, that, as a Kshatrya, it is his duty to fight,—that duty requires men to act without concern for the result,—and, moreover, that he need not grieve at the thought of death, "because the soul neither killeth nor is killed; it is without birth, and cannot be destroyed in this its mortal frame:"—

> "And be thou sure the mighty boundless Soul,
> The Eternal Essence that pervades this Whole,
> Can never perish, never waste away:
> 'Tis indestructible, nor knows decay. . . .
> Up, then, and conquer! in thy might arise!
> Fear not to slay It, for It never dies. . . .
> As men throw off their garments worn and old,
> And newer raiment round their bodies fold,
> The ethereal spirit leaves its mortal shell,
> And finds another form wherein to dwell.

Essence of Life !—It lives, undimmed its ray,
Though fiercest fire or keen dart seek to slay. . . .
Viewless, immutable, unshaken, still,
It rests secure, yet wanders where It will.
Incomprehensible !—It knows not change,
Boundless in being, limitless in range.
This is the nature of the Soul, great Chief !
It lives for ever, therefore spare thy grief. . . .
All that is born must die,—that dies, be born again." *

We have shown the idea of God which the Aryans held in the periods of the Vedas and of the Code of Manu. Sixteen hundred years after the latter of these periods, the Bhagavat-gita represents the Deity thus speaking of himself :—

" Life of all life—Prop of this earthly frame—
Whither all beings go, from whence they came,
I am the Best ; from ME all beings spring,
And rest on me, like pearls on a string. . . .
I am the Father and the fostering Nurse,
Grand-sire, and Mother of the Universe ;
I am the Vedas and the Mystic Word,
The Way, Support, the Witness, and the Lord." †

And in the lines which immediately follow, we find (though somewhat more strongly expressed than in the original) the doctrine that Faith alone is a sufficient and the best means of attaining salvation and happiness, carried to the eminently pernicious extent (not unknown even in Christian Churches) of holding that this *bhakti* or " faith " will save whether one's works be " worthy or evil." And by this faith also, it is stated in the two last lines, believers attain to union with God—He being in them, and they in Him : a doctrine held, in one form or other, by nearly all the educated classes in India, and which forms a peculiar feature also of the Christian religion. The lines in question are as follows :—

" Do all thine acts to Me through all thy days—
Thy food, thy gifts, thy sacrifice, thy praise,—
Then will the bonds of actions done by thee,
Worthy or evil, leave thy spirit free ;

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* GRIFFITH'S *Specimens of Old Indian Poetry*, p. 64-5. † *Ibid.*, p. 66-7.

And thy pure soul, renouncing earthly care,
Will come unshackled, and My Essence share.
Though equal looks on all things I bestow,
Nor enmity nor partial fondness know,*
Yet happy they who love Me faithfully:
I dwell within them ever,—they in Me." †

"The worship of Almighty God in His unity is the fundamental principle of the ancient Hindoo religion," wrote a Brahman lately in a letter addressed to the English press; "and the errors and misconceptions of ages have encrusted thereon pantheism and polytheism, idolatry and superstition, which, I grieve to say, are now received and believed by the mass of the people as the tenets of their creed." For, he adds, "there are very few, even among the Brahmans, who comprehend their ancient faith." The Brahmans, he goes on to say, "believe that to love God and His creatures is the chiefest of virtues; and some of them carry this doctrine of kindliness so far, that they reckon it an inexpiable sin to hurt any sentient being whatsoever. As to Toleration, they are ever ready to listen to what any one has to say who proposes to communicate any knowledge, whether sacred or profane; and to hate any person for entertaining sentiments contrary to their own, is altogether foreign to their nature." ‡ We believe this to be a perfectly fair and honest statement of the matter. The great mass of the Indian population are grossly superstitious, polytheistic, and idolatrous; they were so before the Aryans entered India, and the Brahmans, though effecting some improvments, have not been able to raise them much above their old habits and beliefs. The reaction of this immense mass of non-Aryan population upon the Brahmans themselves has been most pernicious; and to this powerful influence of contagion must be added the fact

* This couplet will remind the reader of Pope's lines, in his *Essay on Man*:—

"Who sees with equal eye, as God of all,
A hero perish, or a sparrow fall."

† GRIFFITH'S *Specimens of Old Indian Poetry*, p. 68.

‡ Letter of Dukinarunjun Mookerjia, which appeared in many of the newspapers of this country in August 1858.

that the Vedas, the Aryan Scriptures, being written in a dialect more than 3000 years old, have become unintelligible to the Brahmans themselves, with a very few exceptions.

So matters stand ; but a new era is beginning. The arrival of the British in India seems destined by Providence to arouse the educated classes of the Hindoos from their lethargy, and to launch them on a new course of inquiry. Of late years, since British supremacy was established, and the upper classes of the natives have been forced to rely for estimation with their conquerors upon intrinsic worth, a movement has begun which may lead to important results. In their intercourse with the British, the better class of Brahmans have been galled to find themselves charged with the gross superstitions and idolatry of the masses ; and, in consequence, they have been stirred up to reassert their own more spiritual doctrines, and, discarding the Puranas, to revert to their early standards of faith. The movement is as yet but a tendency, but it will gather strength. The publication of the pure text of the Vedas, with a translation, now being made at the expense of the Indian Government, and a more careful study of the Code of Manu, will by-and-by suffice to show the Brahmans that, as a body, they have grossly and shamefully declined from their old faith. Perhaps, too, they will come to see how, in the last two thousand years, they have been entrammelled by the usages and leavened by the spirit of a population distinct from and inferior to their own ; and pride of nation will thus co-operate with other influences in producing a spiritual revival amongst the Brahmanical Aryans. And they are the hereditary leaders of India. Where they go, the rest of the population, to the extent of their faculties and opportunities, will be willing to follow.

As the Brahmans, in ages long past, accommodated or toned down their religious beliefs to suit the non-Aryan population, so did the Roman Catholic missionaries, in their day, seek converts among the natives by making a compromise between Hindooism and Christianity. Had they been better versed in

the religions of the country, they probably would not have hesitated to preach Christ as another Budha to the Budhists of Ceylon,—to the people of Southern India, as an incarnation of Vishnoo,—and to the Brahmans as the holiest of all *rishis* or saints, and as the highest manifestation of the Supreme in this world. We Protestants, on the other hand, repudiate all such compromise as blasphemous and profane. We will not consent, by such means, to purchase the quick triumphs of the Romanists; but, content to wait, we look for a purer and nobler triumph in the end. But we must bear our souls in patience. One false step may do more to retard the work, than ten or twenty years of labour will do to advance it. Christianity must grow upon the Hindoos. Anything savouring of persecution would be as impolitic as it would be unrighteous. Persecution only hardens and makes fanatics. And under its pressure men go to the stake, glorying in their faith, who, if left to think over their opinions quietly, would in due time have abandoned them as unrighteous or absurd. Let missionary work go on as it is doing. But the best way to evangelise India is to promote the work of evangelisation at home. There is no preaching like that of personal example. We are the ruling class in India,—we are looked up to by the natives,—our officers are in every district, and every officer or judge or revenue-collector is a centre of influence. Let these men do their duty, and we shall have an agency far more powerful than any possible development which we can give to missions. Let them, to use the admirable words of Lord Stanley, ever "remember that for a European in India there is, strictly speaking, no private life: he is one of the ruling race—the few among the many—one of a population some 10,000 strong among more than one hundred millions. There are, little as he may know or care about it, quick eyes to watch his conduct, and envious tongues ready enough to disparage his nation and his race. This is not merely a personal matter. A single officer who forgets that he is an officer and a gentleman, does more harm to the moral influence of this country than ten men of blameless life can do good."

"CHRISTOPHER NORTH"

IN MEMORIAM

May 1854.

THE country has lost another of its great literary celebrities. Having all but completed his threescore years and ten, the poet of the "Isle of Palms"—the author of the inextinguishable laughter of the "Noctes"—the brilliant and high-toned lecturer on man's Moral Being, has been gathered to his fathers. He was the last of the galaxy of poets which the past generation produced; and, as such, his death marks an era. Byron, Southey, Moore, Wordsworth, Campbell, Coleridge, Scott, and now Wilson, are all gone: and we are fairly entered on a new era, and a new school of poetry, which, though exhibiting abundant beauty of its own, is not likely to rival, either in popularity or in enduring fame, that of the generation now closed. On a level with none of the illustrious authors mentioned above would we place Wilson as a poet, but as a man he was greater than any of them: and we feel, while paying this just but feeble tribute to his memory, that it is no vain phrase to say that, "take him all in all, we ne'er shall look upon his like again."

It was a curious position, and one in many respects without a parallel, which Wilson occupied in the public eye. It was not merely as an author, but far more as a man, that he was remarkable. He had become almost personally familiar—to an extent which few authors ever attain, even although their

works should have attracted a higher degree of celebrity than any one of his; and this personal celebrity was magnified, though in some measure also distorted, by the way in which the actual man was associated in the mind of the public with all the sayings and doings of that most successful of mythical personages—"Christopher North."

We need not dwell upon the story of his life; although, in competent hands, the biography of this most genial-hearted, exuberant, and highly-gifted man ought to make one of the most fascinating memoirs that ever issued from the press. The son of a wealthy cloth-manufacturer of Paisley, he was born in that town on the 19th of May 1785; and after being boarded for some years at the manse of Mearns—a parish lying midway between Paisley and Glasgow—he was transferred to the University of Glasgow, and subsequently to that of Oxford, where he entered Magdalen College as a gentleman-commoner. Here his natural genius began to show itself; and, among other honours, he carried off the Newdegate prize of fifty guineas for an English poem of as many lines, on the subject of Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture—a production which, doubtless justly, he afterwards regarded as a mere boyish effort. Upon quitting Oxford, he purchased the beautiful estate of Elleray, on the banks of Lake Windermere; and in the picturesque beauty of this now celebrated district, as well as in the company of his brother-poet Wordsworth, he found much to minister to his highly poetic temperament. Wordsworth and he became fast friends—although the sedate, unimpassioned (and, for paradox sake, we may say, prosaic) poet of the Lyrical Ballads and the "Excursion" was in character the very antipodes of the irrepressibly buoyant, enthusiastic, and idealising youth who so soon afterwards delighted the public, and shocked the old stagers of the literary world, by his brilliant sallies in the "Noctes." At Windermere he was Admiral of the Lakes, and led the way in his yacht on occasion of the memorable visit of Scott and Canning to that romantic locality. Strange anec-

dotes are told of his eccentricity and adventurous spirit during this period of his life; many of which, however, we must warn our readers, are nothing better than myths engendered in the heated mind of the public, by those fanciful and humorous exaggerations of his peculiarities which he delighted to dash off in the character of Christopher North.

In this heyday of his life, Wilson was distinguished by that fine physical development and lion-like port, upon which, even until lately, years produced but little effect, and which among his college friends acquired for him a pre-eminence in the boating, pugilistic, and other athletic exercises in which the youth of England so much delight. What is true of many other eminent men, is said to have been true of Wilson—namely, that he was more his *mother's* son than his father's. Traditional remembrances of this lady's wit and beauty are still preserved; and if report can be believed, the resemblance was as marked in the physical as in the mental characteristics of her son. In the flush of early youth, he must have been a very model of manly beauty; and his magnificent face and head would have satisfied the most fastidious disciples of the school either of Spurzheim or Lavater.

Having been obliged, in consequence of profuse expenditure and some reverses of fortune, to abandon his romantic retreat at the Lakes, Wilson returned to Scotland, and rejoined his widowed mother, then residing in Edinburgh. He adopted the law as his nominal profession, but probably with no fixed intention of practising it. In 1818 he became a candidate for the chair of Moral Philosophy in the University of Edinburgh; and although great opposition was made to him, on account of his sporting predilections and exuberant disregard of conventionalities, yet the influence of Scott, Wordsworth, and other men of eminence, sufficed to secure his election. It was in the previous year that *Blackwood's Magazine* was established—a periodical which, from its seventh number downwards (though latterly by intermitting fits), continued to draw more memor-

able support from him than any journal ever did from the pen of an individual writer. He was not at any time the editor of the Magazine, but he was its intellectual Atlas, and probably exercised an important influence on the rôle which that publication has since played in the world of letters. Although no man but himself could have so successfully contended, single-handed, with Jeffrey and the Whig coteries of Edinburgh, and although frequently put forward as the mouthpiece of his party, Wilson's political position was in a manner accidental only. He dashed off his telling articles with infinite zest—he loved nothing better than to astonish, and ridicule, and castigate the starched-up literary priggism of Edinburgh Whiggery; but his mind was too broad, his sympathies too catholic, for him long to remain a political partisan, and he gradually betook himself to the more lastingly congenial field of general literature. A selection from the contributions of his eloquent pen to *Blackwood's Magazine* was published in 1842, under the title of "Recreations of Christopher North," which manifests in a remarkable degree that true poetry and fairy-like fancy which characterise his writings.

The "Recreations" is, in many respects, a very remarkable work. It consists partly of exquisite criticism in the vein peculiar to Wilson,—in which the book reviewed is lost sight of in the all-pervading personality of the reviewer. But the greater and still more delightful portion, is that which depicts scenes in the life of "Christopher" himself. In these he idealises the events of his youthful life. The Past rises up before the mind's eye of the ardent writer, with all its main features unchanged, but eclectically gathered into artistic groups, and bathed and consecrated in that "light that never was on sea or shore." It is a beneficent provision of our nature that, as the Past recedes from us, its sunny hours linger longest on the memory: its shadows and clouds soon disappear in the distance, leaving its bright spots alone in view. The Past, in truth, as Emerson says, is ever a poet, bathing our youthful

days in *couleur de rose;* and in the airy domain of Memory, not less than in the world of realities, we experience the truth of Keats's happy saying, that "a thing of beauty is a joy for ever." Wilson was born of affluent parents, and he seems to have been tenderly cared for; and these "Recreations" everywhere bear throughout them the impress of a happy boyhood. His temperament was one peculiarly fitted for the enjoyment of the impetuous sports and joys of youth; and often, amidst the gravest moralising or the finest criticism, we find him fondly recurring to his and his fellow-boarders' adventures on the Moor of Mearns,—to the pools and banks of Humbie Burn,—the trouts in the "Four Lochs," and all the ongoings, whether merry or sad, of the good people of what he still affectionately calls "Our Parish." Not less dearly does he refer to "my father's house," to which he and his brothers used to return at the Christmas or midsummer holidays, somewhere near the old Abbey of Paisley. "That house," he says, "to my eyes the fairest of earthly dwellings, with its old ivied turrets and orchard-garden, bright alike with fruit and with flowers," but of which, he tells us, not one stone now remains. "The very brook that washed its foundations has vanished along with them; and a crowd of other buildings, wholly without character, has long stood where here a single tree, and there a grove, did once render so lovely that small demesne; which, how could we, who thought it the very heart of Paradise, even for one moment, have believed, was one day to be blotted out of being, and we ourselves—then so linked in love that the band which bound us altogether was, in its gentle pressure, felt not nor understood—to be scattered far and abroad, like so many leaves that, after one wild parting rustle, are separated by roaring wind-eddies and brought together no more!"

With hardly less fondness, in these "Recreations," does he dwell on Windermere, the Lakes, and Elleray. And well might he dwell on such souvenirs, for, apart from the romantic loveliness of that district, where so much of his early manhood

was spent, it was there that he met with one, "whose grace and goodness," said Lockhart, with touching delicacy, after she was no more, "could have found no fitter home than Elleray, except *where she is now.*" The object of his attachment was a young English lady of some fortune, and of much personal attractions; and it was under the mild sunny radiance of his early married life with this lady, that Wilson made his first definite essay in poetry, in his "Elegy on the Death of Grahame," and the "Isle of Palms." His partner was one every way worthy of *him*; and it has been said by one who knew her well, that "if ever there was a woman to be sorrowed for throughout a widowed life, it was she,—so opposite to the dazzling impetuous spirit of her mate, in the beautiful gentleness and equanimity of her temper, yet adapting herself so entirely to his tastes, and repaid by such a deep and lasting affection." Her death was a blow which Wilson felt with all the deep tenderness of his nature; and when he resumed his duties at the University after that event, he made his apology to his class for not having examined their essays, in the exquisite and touching words—"I could not see to read them in the darkness of the valley of the shadow of death!"

We may mention also, as illustrative of the undying affection which Wilson cherished for this amiable and attractive lady, that when recently conversing with a young friend (who attended the Professor in almost the last course of lectures which he delivered) as to the powerful influence which the earnest eloquence of Wilson so often produced on his hearers, our ex-student mentioned, as the most memorable instance of this which he remembered, a lecture upon Memory, in which the Professor was describing the way in which a long-widowed husband would look back upon the early partner of his lot. The warm eloquence of the lecturer held his audience enchained. On and on he went, waxing more and more touching and impressive, and his face lighting up with emotion as the words came rushing to his lips. His eyes began to fill with

moisture—then the lower jaw began to tremble—and at last, overpowered by his emotions, the old man stopped in mid career, and buried his head in his arms on the desk before him. For a minute there was perfect stillness in the class; and when Wilson at length raised his head, and two big tears were seen rolling down his cheeks as he essayed to proceed, his voice was drowned in the sympathetic cheers of the young students around him.

It is instructive to mark the several stages in the literary career of this eminent man. First we have the "Isle of Palms" and his other poems,—characterised by a dreamy beauty, a graceful diffuseness, and exhibiting sentiment and action too idealised to take much hold upon the interest of the reader. Next we have the astonishing and unique prose of his "Noctes," overflowing with the richest humour, and in all its parts redolent with the spirit of the banquet; and moreover indulging in playful exaggerations, which being taken as literal facts by a large portion of the public, won for the really temperate Wilson a reputation for excessive conviviality and eccentricities which belonged only to the ideal "Christopher North." Next, passing from this region of boisterous mirth, we come to his "Recreations," over which a gentler feeling presides. Here we find humour dissociated from its rougher concomitants, and blent in delightful union with that tender idealising spirit of beauty, which was the strongest characteristic of Wilson's mind, ever and anon interspersed with passages of profoundest thought. Lastly, we come to the final series with which he enriched the pages of *Blackwood*—his "Dies Boreales,"—a series so called in graceful antagonism to his "Ambrosial Nights," and which (containing some of the finest passages he ever wrote) evidence on every page what a mighty change had deepened over that flashing intellect with the lapse of years. Wilson's spirit was always a religious one. Amidst all the freaks and extravagancies of his earlier years, the religious feeling remained unobscured, and grew, as such feelings ought

ever to grow, in strength, as he advanced on the journey of life. Disregardful of conventionalities, the refuge of weak minds, and disdaining hypocrisy in every shape, Wilson's religion had nothing in it akin to that of the formalist, and was far profounder and more pervading than any mere sentiment. It lay firm and strong, the very basis of his nature; and in those "Dies Boreales"—the last of which was written after his retirement from the professor's chair, and when every one thought his literary career was for ever closed—this deeply religious spirit shines forth in augmented strength and beauty. It has grown robust since the youthful days of his poetry,—it has grown far wiser, more practical, more searching, more profound, but still marked, as of yore, with that width of sympathy and genial spirit of love which so endeared the man to all who knew him. Profound and subtle thought, relieved by a graceful humour, forms the staple of these latest productions of his eloquent pen; but throughout them all there breathes the religious spirit of which we have spoken, mingling with and hallowing their beauties—at once solemn and brilliant, a Boreal sky with all its stars.

Both in his poetry and in his prose, Wilson exhibited peculiar talents, which suffice to distinguish his writings from those of any other author. It cannot be doubted that he was stronger in his prose than in his verse; or rather, we should say, he threw more genuine poetry into his prose writings than he ever did in his poems. Nor is it difficult to understand how this should be, when we recollect that he may be said to have left the field of poetry when his mind was scarcely out of its juvenescence. The muse of Wilson deals only with the gentler and purer feelings of our nature, and with the more refined and delicate perceptions; and even in the description of human misery and wickedness, he cannot help mingling some ethereal and redeeming touches. "By the youthful genius of Wilson," says Delta, "it seems to have been felt something like sin to approach the confines of guilt and crime, or to delineate any of

the darker and more repulsive features of human nature. His contemplations are all of the soft and serene; even his descriptions are confined to the fair and beautiful; the rugged under his touch acquires a moonlight shading; sorrow becomes sanctified, and the thunder-storm, along with its devouring lightning, has ever its fertilising shower. It is his bathing all his characters in the 'purple light of love,' which unfits Professor Wilson for shining as a poet of consummate dramatic power." While in the act of composition, his mind seems to have been worked up to a kind of exalted reverie, in which he saw the material world, with its lovely valleys and magnificent mountains, its murmuring rivers and rolling oceans, its sheeted lakes and umbrageous forests, outstretched before him in one vast panorama of phantasmagorial pageantry. And one of the great defects of his earlier poetry will be found to result from the "fatal facility" with which, in those hours of inspiration, he found expression for his exuberant wealth of thought and imagery.

Lockhart, describing Wilson in 1819, says:—"The effect of his features was more eloquent, both in its gravity and in its levity, than almost any countenance I am acquainted with is in any one cast of expression; and yet I am not without my suspicions that the versatility of its language may in the end take away from its power. In a convivial meeting—more particularly after the two first hours are over—the beauty to which men are most alive in any piece of eloquence is that which depends on its being impregnated and instinct with feeling. Of this beauty no eloquence can be more full than that of Mr John Wilson. His declamation is often loose and irregular to an extent that is not quite worthy of a man of his fine education and masculine powers; but all is redeemed, and more than redeemed, by his rich abundance of quick, generous, and expansive feeling. The flashing brightness, and now and then the still more expressive dimness of his eye, and the tremulous music of a voice that is equally at home

in the highest and the lowest of notes, and the attitude, bent forward with an earnestness to which the Graces could make no valuable addition, altogether compose an index which they that run may read, a rod of communication to whose electricity no heart is barred." Warren, who also knew him well, says:—"His conversation and his public speaking had in them a charm to which no other term is applicable but that of fascination, and which, in the zenith of his powers, we never met with any one able to resist. While his glittering eye held the spectators captive, and the music of the ever-varying voice, modulating up and down with the changing character of the theme, fell on the ear, and a flood of imagery invested the subject with every conceivable attribute of the touching, the playful, or the picturesque, the effect was electric, indescribable: it imprisoned the minds of the auditors; they seemed to fear that the sound would cease—they held their breath as if under the influence of a spell."

In our opinion, the *vis poetica* was stronger in Wilson than in almost any author that ever lived. Even to look at him was sufficient to impress one with a sense of the peculiar vividness of his poetic faculty. His face was instinct with feeling, joined to an expression of power which proved the emotions to be no mere vapour that could influence so much strength. His eye, full of the "lightnings of genius," was the most inspired one we ever beheld; and his appearance when animated—his noble head, with its flashing eyes, and wild-floating hair, and the sympathetic motion of his frame—was more like that of the inspired bards of Israel than any other ideal we can fancy. His style was a faithful exponent of the man; and it has been remarked of his prose writings, that he "approaches more nearly than any modern since Burke, to that wild prophetic movement of style and manner which the bards of Israel exhibit—nay, more nearly even than Burke, since with Wilson it is a perpetual afflatus." That he did not do more, therefore, in the region of pure poetry, is mainly due to

his idiosyncrasies—to his aversion to the shackles of rhyme and rhythm, and to that impatience of systematic labour which marked the whole character of the man. As is usual with temperaments like his, long fits of indolence were broken by bursts of intellectual vigour. He needed no aid of stimulants to awake his weird-like powers; but often he might have been seen pacing his room rapidly to and fro, when on the eve of some literary task, muttering and speaking to himself, as thought upon thought came rushing upon him; until the tide of inspiration broke over him, exalting his faculties, and laying the whole theme plain and map-like before him; and then the pen was seized, and the task was accomplished with unexampled rapidity—with the hurry and rush as of a charge of cavalry. His handwriting, curiously enough, reflected the change which occurred in his intellectual temperament when he forsook verse for prose. The manuscript of the "Isle of Palms," that dreamy and paradisaical tale of the sea, is singularly elegant and clear; but as he advanced in years, and threw himself impetuously into that poetic prose which proved so congenial to him, his manuscript broke the fetters of neatness and precision, and became bounding and leaping, hurrying along in almost illegible haste, and evidently tasked to the uttermost to keep pace with the rapid outpourings of the mental fountains.

Poetry was but one and the earliest phase of Wilson's many-sided character; and we have said that it is marked by a dreamy beauty, sometimes splendour, and a fancy too ethereal to take a strong hold of the heart. His prose writings are more difficult to characterise. They are the outpourings of an improvisatore; unequal, but fascinating; full of power and variety; ranging from pictures of ideal beauty to defiant humour; now throwing out pregnant suggestions for thought, and again dashing off graphic descriptions, that place their subjects visibly before the mind's eye of the reader. His style is like the rushing of a strong river, whose every tone, from its

lightest laughing ripple to the thunder of the waterfall, is wondrously melodious; whose crystal flood pictures in easy, but often startling, succession, every change of scenery in its way, reflecting in beauty all things in earth and sky; now fairy-like, with its airy spray and rainbow-tinted foam; now leaping joyously, exultingly, exuberantly, as if inebriate Tritons urged its course; and in all times, and in all places, exhibiting strength and beauty in a rare union—in a union (why should it not be said?) like that exhibited in his own person, ere years had replaced by the venerable the graces of youth. Whether as a writer or an orator, he passed without an effort from "grave to gay, from lively to severe." Who that ever heard it, can have forgotten his magnificent description in his lectures of the "Stoic of the Woods"—a passage which made even Sir William Hamilton, cool and unimpassioned as he was, start to his feet? Who does not remember his splendid critiques on Shakespeare's plays, as illustrative of the operation of the passions; or fail to recall the happy phrase in which he characterised the last action of Desdemona as a "*holy lie*"?

As a critic, Professor Wilson was never equalled in his peculiar walk. He not only pronounced singularly correct and happily-expressed literary judgments, but he always gave admirable reasons for them; and, moreover (and this is his distinguishing feature), he threw into his articles so much original thinking, as to raise those unique disquisitions far above the sphere of mere reviewing, into that of original poetic teaching. Minute, marvellously searching, and profound, and lightening the profundity of his reflections by a vein of the most genial humour—rivalling Jeffrey in delicacy, transcending him immeasurably in genius, originality, and power, Wilson united the loveliness of a poet's heart and fancy to the subtle analysis of the moral philosopher. His criticism, which restricted itself to Art as expressed in literature, was of the widest range, from a single word or phrase up to the general character of a whole work. Often, with the brevity and

brilliance which none but a poet may aspire to, he presents the essence or spirit of a work in a few sentences of exquisite beauty; condensing the grand ideas or airy thoughts of the author into statue-like forms, the offspring of his own poetic creation. But it is minute criticism, it is brilliant analysis, that is his peculiar province: it is in his "Essay on Byron's Address to the Ocean," or on the *Time* of Shakspeare's Tragedies, that his *modus operandi* is most characteristic: and in this no one ever approached him.

The great bane of criticism is generally its narrow and carping spirit, arising, on the one hand, from envy, and on the other from the fact that most men are able to view things only from one (their own) point of view. Indeed, true criticism—which embraces an exposition of the beauties, as well as a dissection of the blemishes of a work—in order to be rightly performed, demands that the critic should be equal in mental power to the author whose works he reviews. Now, Wilson was a man of extraordinary gifts, and he was likewise remarkably free from everything like envy and the meaner feelings of our nature. "Animosities die, the Humanities are immortal," was a noble saying of his own. He was generous to the core; and however severe his critical castigations sometimes were, his wide sympathies and geniality of spirit were quite as remarkable as the acuteness of his perception and the richness of his language. "There, perhaps, never," says Gilfillan, "was a man gifted with such a universality of sympathy with all that is intellectual. He had points in common with all—with the elegant fastidiousness of Lockhart, the broad humour and inspired idiocy of the Ettrick Shepherd, the polished coterieism of Moore, the masculine benevolence of Chalmers, the disputatious logic of De Quincey, the playful humour of Lamb, the enjoué and often felicitous criticism of Hunt, and the honest aspirations of less gifted individuals. In private, he knew no antipathies—no sectarian distinctions: artist or littérateur, politician, or mere man of the world, Whig, Tory, or Radical

—all were welcome who could talk well, or listen intelligently, and were good men and true. He gave full vent to his love of conversational discussion, alternately jubilant in expression of common tastes, and impetuous in controversial debate—always suggestive, always impressing his hearers with the feeling that they were listening to a man of genius." "In the multiform nature of Wilson," says Thomas Aird, in his memoir of Delta, "his mastery over the hearts of ingenuous youth is one of his finest characteristics. *It was often won in this peculiar way:* An essay is submitted to him as professor, editor, or friend, by some worthy young man. Mr Wilson does not like it, and says so in general terms. The youth is not satisfied, and, in the tone of one rather injured, begs to know specific faults. The generous Aristarch, never dealing haughtily with a young worth, instantly sits down, and begins by conveying, in the most fearless terms of praise, his sense of that worth; but, this done, woe be to the luckless piece of prose or 'numerous verse!' Down goes the scalpel with the most minute savagery of dissection, and the whole tissues and ramifications of fault are laid bare. The young man is astonished; but his nature is of the right sort; he never forgets the lesson; *and, with bands of* filial affection stronger than hooks of steel, he is knit for life to the man who has dealt with him thus. Many a young heart will recognise this peculiar style of the great nature I speak of; this severe service was done to Delta, and he was the young man to profit by it: the friendship became all the firmer."

Wilson was in his thirty-fourth year when he became Professor of Moral Philosophy in the Edinburgh University; and the zealous supporters who won for him the appointment did not judge ill when they inferred in him a capability, however little patent at that time to the general eye, for the profoundest seriousness of view, and the most delicate sympathies with every youthful impulse. For two-and-thirty years—from 1820 till 1851—he continued to discharge the duties of the professorship with so undeniable a power, so lofty an enthusiasm, and so glori-

ous an eloquence, that the title of the office has become inseparably joined to his own illustrious name. As a Professor, as in every other phase of his life, Wilson was a man *sui generis*, scattering high and profound thoughts with a prodigal splendour, rather than concentrating his powers on the formation of any precise system. It has sometimes been alleged, in disparagement of him, by comparison with his two immediate predecessors, Dugald Stewart and Dr Thomas Brown, that they did, but that he did not, come forward with original contributions to mental philosophy. Wilson is allowed the credit of lecturing splendidly; but the complaint is, that he did not place his own name on the roll of independent philosophers. Now, we agree with De Quincey that Brown and Stewart are by no means the original philosophers they are usually taken for; and both of them have already been left far behind by the march of inquiry. Wilson's impetuous and discursive turn of mind—a mind poetic rather than scientific in its cast—instinctive, rather than laboriously analytic in its perception—was unfavourable to the maturing of precise and systematic opinions. He had little of that love of logic and intellectual analysis which distinguished the prelections of his predecessors. But there is another and far ampler philosophy—"a philosophy of human nature, like the philosophy of Shakespeare, and of Jeremy Taylor, and of Edmund Burke, which (says De Quincey) is scattered through the miscellaneous papers of Professor Wilson. Such philosophy, by its very nature, is of a far higher and more aspiring cast than any which lingers upon mere scholastic conundrums. It is a philosophy that cannot be presented in abstract forms, but hides itself as an incarnation in voluminous mazes of eloquence and poetic feeling. Look for this among the critical essays of Professor Wilson, which, for continual glimpses and revelations of hidden truth, are perhaps absolutely unrivalled. By such philosophy his various courses of lectures—we speak on the authority of many of his highest students—are throughout distinguished; and more especially

those numerous disquisitions on man's moral being, his passions, his affections, and his imaginations, in which Professor Wilson displays his own genius—its originality and power." Of the influence which he exerted upon the mind of his numerous pupils, it has been well remarked that "there is not a single parish in Scotland where some one of the twelve thousand students of his thirty years' teaching will not now recollect that college session, in the Moral Philosophy Class, when the first serious consciousness was awakened in himself, the first intellectual enthusiasm raised by the eloquent voice, and feeling also as if a more than personal tie were broken. There was in the presence of the Man—in his whole style of thought and utterance, something so vivid, heroical, and thoroughly akin to the generous impulses of youth, when its romance is highest, though about to close, that no after-teaching could obliterate *his;* and even Chalmers, with his four-years' curriculum, while he might endear himself more intimately amidst all the relations of a professorial career, did not print on his own students themselves so ineffaceable an image of the lofty Instructor, to whom memory owes perpetual gratitude, as Wilson on all the long variety of youthful intelligence that has passed through *his* hands toward every path of life."

His aversion to systematic and continuous mental labour, may be traced throughout the whole literary productions of Wilson. Looking at the amazing splendour and power exhibited in his magazine articles, in his lectures, and in a lesser degree in his poems, the regret spontaneously suggests itself that he did not concentrate his efforts more, and throw the same energy and fiery genius into the composition of a systematic work. But the fault, if fault it be, lay in the idiosyncrasies of the man. His keen-sighted friend and intellectual comrade, Lockhart, early perceived this tendency of his nature, and in his "Peter's Letters" made the following acute remarks:—"A man who has only one talent, and who is so fortunate as to be early led to exercise it in a judicious direc-

tion, may soon be expected to sound the depth of his power, and to strengthen himself with those appliances which are most proper to insure his success. But he whose mind is rich in a thousand quarters—who finds himself surrounded with an intellectual armoury of many and various kinds of weapons—is happy, indeed, if he does not lose more time in digressing into the surface of those ores than his life can allow him time to dig to their foundations—in trying the edge of more instruments than it is possible for any one man to understand thoroughly, and wield with the assured skill of a true master. Mr Wilson seems to possess one of the widest ranges of intellectual capacity of any I have ever met with. In his conversation, he passes from the gravest to the gayest of themes, and seems to be alike at home in them all; but, perhaps, the facility with which in conversation he finds himself to make use of all his power, may only serve to give him wrong and loose notions concerning the more serious purposes to which he ought to render his great power subservient. In his prose writings, in like manner, he handles every kind of key, and he handles many well—but this, also, I should fear, may tend to render him over-careless in his choice—more slow in selecting some one field—or, if you will, more than one—on which to concentrate his energies, and make a sober, manly, determinate display of what nature has rendered him capable of doing."

An *embarras de richesses* was really the main cause of the fragmentary character of Wilson's literary efforts; it was not indolence, but the many-sidedness of his nature. He was brimful of power—overflowing with original thought in all walks of literature; and he could not bring himself to forego the delight of expatiating upon all, for the sake of doing full justice to one. The greater part of his writings was in the form of *spoken thought*—dashed off in the superbest of epistolary styles: it was his brilliant mental processes daguerreotyped. Any one who has ever enjoyed the pleasure, either in conversation or

letter-writing, of thus throwing off his welling thoughts, thick and fast and bright as they come upon him, will understand how delightful such a process must have been to a mind like Wilson's—a mind as rich as it was impetuous, and which revelled in original thought as in an inexhaustible mine. His mind seems to have been in a constant sparkle. When he looked within, he beheld noble humorous and beautiful ideas flashing thick and fast, like lights in a diamond-mine or shooting stars in the November skies. He felt that he had within him treasures enough to work, without seeking for materials in the outer world: and, in point of fact, he only made use of external subjects as awakeners of the ideas within, and as nebulous centre-points around which to dispose the planet-thoughts of his own mind. He doubtless felt, as every great mind must ever feel, that nine-tenths of the rare and noble thoughts that arose within him could never be chronicled or given to the world, and must die with him as silently as if they had never been. And possibly he may have said to himself—"If I set myself to write a great work, the greater part of it must be fashioned of materials common to all, and which others may use for the same purpose, though it may be with less skill than I. But these thoughts, these emotions within me—*they are mine*, and mine only; and shall I not, then, give nature her way, and delight myself by pouring forth treasures so essentially original, rather than in laboriously rearing a work which, though it may be more useful and more enduring, is less *mine*, and which may be fashioned quite as well by others after I myself am dead and gone?"

A really great mind is ever greater—far greater, than its written works, even though it make literature the business of its life. And many a gifted intellect at times, when mentally scanning his capacities, and counting the untold wealth within, has bowed his head despondingly—*how* despondingly, smaller men never know—to feel that he will never be able to do justice to his powers, or glorify his Maker by showing or teaching

to others the treasures of his soul. The wisdom of Genius, what is it but a key to the dark things in nature and providence? Explain as you will how man gets knowledge, *wisdom*, in its highest forms, is ever felt by its possessors to be really an enlightment from on high. And is it not a privilege to communicate this to the world—to bring mankind more face to face with their Creator, and to show to the weak, the faithless, and the grovelling, what a noble thing is the human soul?

That Wilson was a far greater man than author, we need hardly say. A mere fraction of his noble nature remains to us embodied in his works. He did not live *to write*. He made no deliberate attempt to set his mind in its entireness before the world—probably from the very feeling that life was too short for such an undertaking. He seems rather to have used literature simply as a means of cultivating and rejoicing his own nature. Now as a poet, now as a critic, now as a fervid politician, now as a tale-writer, now as an eloquent lecturer, now, and most frequently of all, as the broad sunny man, with a heart for all things, he appears in his writings to be merely disporting *himself—to be simply giving* that airing and exercise to his mental faculties, which they crave not less strongly than those of the body. Now, to build up one's Inner-self is a nobler thing than to become a giant in print; and as the latter of these tasks may often conflict with the former, we ought not to be over-ready to judge of men merely by their literary monuments, or to charge as a fault an abstention from systematic work which may have been the result of a wise instinct or of a self-denying reflection. We do not say that such was the case with Wilson; but we do say, that the more he is examined and understood, the greater does he appear before us in that highest of all aspects, *as a man*. A very Alcibiades among modern intellects, the man was always greater than his works. He was not the artist, interesting for his work's sake, though the private life be not worth a thought: but his works were seen to be but an

episode of his many-sided life—a fragment splintered off from the noble whole of his being.

Is not the death of such a man suggestive of high and solemn thought? Is it not a text, from which one might discourse most eloquently to those most forlorn of human beings, who, lost in the mazes of a miscalled science, delight to prove to themselves that man is but dust, and that the soul perishes with its ephemeral tenement? For if there indeed be no future life for man, must it not be deepest anguish to a noble nature like Wilson's to feel the icy hand of death upon him, when his faculties are still but half developed, and when he feels within him powers that only await fitting opportunities to burst forth in unrivalled splendour? But the Christian sage, be he young or old—be he cut off early and without his fame, or live honoured to a good old age—has ever this consolatory reflection, that life and progress do not end at the grave. He looks within, and beholds his spirit—*himself*—still fresh, even amid the decay of the body; ever waxing wiser, holier, nobler. It grows!—ay, and he knows that it will continue to grow in other worlds even as here. And whatever may have been the dowry of high thoughts which his Maker has given him, and however much too short life may have been to set these forth to the world, he at least knows, that though he has not had time here, he will have it in Eternity.

In 1852, advancing years induced Professor Wilson to retire from the chair in the University which he had so long and ably filled; and this he did, as beseemed the man, without asking for the retiring allowance, which, in such circumstances, is usual. At this time no symptoms of ill-health had appeared. The man was still unbroken. Immediately afterwards, however, he experienced a stroke of paralysis; and, as is not seldom observed in those who have been blessed with long unbroken health, his iron frame suddenly gave way,—attended by a slight impairment of his intellectual faculties, which showed itself chiefly in a loss of memory: a state of matters which, broken with favour-

able gleams, continued up to the day of his death. It is a curious and sad remark, that in the case of almost all the great poets of the past generation—certainly of all of them who reached old age—it was the over-tasked brain that gave way. The very delicacy and exquisite sensibility of a poet's nature renders the cerebral system in his case peculiarly susceptible to the mental shocks and physical wear and tear of life. In his case, even more than in other men's, experience vouches to the truth of Bulwer's adage, that "though we live longer than our forefathers, *we suffer more.*" We live faster, too,—a more ceaseless tide of thought rolls through the brain,—we prize minutes as our ancestors prized hours, and, whether for mind or body, there are nowadays but few holidays. No wonder, then, that ever and anon the over-worked nervous system should rise in sudden revolt, and mysterious disease invade the precincts of life. For long the soul, throned in the brain, rules like an autocrat every part of the system, and lashes on our flagging powers like Phaëton driving the chariot of the sun. But suddenly there comes a tremor, a concussion, a shudder of the brain, and lo! the charioteer is tossed from his seat—order is subverted in the capital, and a paralysis pervades the extremities. Strange and fell disease! which seems to grow with our civilisation, and loves to mark the foremost men of all the age as its victims. How it has played havoc among the galaxy of poets that adorned the last age—taking from us in turn a Scott, a Southey, a Moore, a Wordsworth, and a WILSON!

And now—that stately figure is gone from the streets of the Scottish metropolis. We shall no more encounter his lion-like port when we revisit the Athens of the North. We shall no more recognise in the distance the well-known broad-rimmed hat, shadowing those bold bright eyes—the ever-fresh complexion, the sandy-coloured hair streaming dishevelled over his shoulders; the shaggy whiskers, handsome throat, and broad turned-over collar; the buttoned coat or surtout, and the firm limbs that seemed to grasp the very earth as he trode along.

We shall no more see the venerable man—"the Professor"—seated at the round table in the saloon at Blackwood's, sitting silently over a book—with the portraits of his old friends, Lockhart, and Hogg, and Delta, and Alison, and Hamilton, and his own, around him; and in the social circles which so long delighted in the genial company of "the old man eloquent," his place shall know him no more. Some able pen—it may be that of one of his own gifted sons-in-law—will doubtless ere long do justice to his memory, and show to the country the man as he lived. For ourselves, we hardly venture to contribute even a stone to his cairn; but we feel of a truth that he has left a void which can never be filled up, and that in him Scotland has lost "a glorious figure,—a stately and heroic Life,—and a beloved Presence from the midst of her."

THE END.

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